





A TOUR IN GREECE

εἶπατε τῷ βασιλῇ χαμαὶ πέσε δαίδαλος αἶλα·
οὔκετι Φοῖβος ἔχει καλὴ βαν, οὐ μάστιδα δάφνην,
οὐ πάγαν λαλέονσαν· ἀπεςβέτο καὶ λάλον ἔδωρ.

—*The Last Oracle.*



Frontispiece.

TEMPLE OF NEPTUNE, PAESTUM.

A TOUR IN GREECE

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BY

RICHARD RIDLEY FARRER

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P R E F A C E.

THE Greek kingdom has of late received no inconsiderable amount of attention at the hands of European politicians. Within the last year it has obtained a large and purely gratuitous increase of territory. But for all that, our actual acquaintance with the country has not kept pace with the growth of this kindly interest in its welfare. On the contrary, it seems to have been more frequently visited before the War of Independence than at the present day. Thus M. Laurent, in his work published about the year 1820 (*Recollections of a Classical Tour*), observes that “the crowd of English tourists who have been in Greece have, as in many other parts of Europe, rendered the expenses of travelling much greater than they were formerly”—a remark irresistibly suggesting that the Turkish authority inspired strangers with a sense of security afterwards unknown; for it will

hardly be denied, even by the most ardent Philhellene, that weak or bad government in Greece has given such scope to the predatory instincts of the population, that travellers have with good reason declined to expose their persons in the provinces. And even Athens, lying outside the line ordinarily taken by steamers from Alexandria to Constantinople, receives fewer visitors than many other places more remote. Therefore, while the whole country is off the track of the ordinary tourist, many of its most interesting parts are untraversed, even by those whose love for Greek art and history has taken them to its capital. Hence current notions as to its true condition are derived mainly from a sojourn in Athens, and short expeditions in its neighbourhood—made, in fact, over just that limited area where roads exist, and give a false idea of the civilisation of the interior.

Europeans who have thus seen but one side of the picture are apt to take the Greeks at their own valuation, and to accept the accounts which from time to time appear setting forth in eulogistic terms the progress and enlightenment of the race. Whether these sketches are over-coloured, may perhaps be gathered from the following pages, containing a simple narrative of our experiences in Greece—experiences often strange-

ly at variance with our anticipations. There are no exciting adventures to relate, no hair-breadth escapes from brigands; but there are constant little surprises, sometimes amusing, frequently annoying, for which it would have been well had we been prepared, and against which we would fain forewarn others. It is our hope that these chapters may contribute their mite of useful information to intending travellers, and may remove some prevailing misapprehensions; and that these engravings may indicate, however faintly, the fair scenery, and still fairer ruins, of a once glorious land—

“The abode of gods, whose shrine no longer burns.”

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A TOUR IN GREECE.

CHAPTER I.

BRINDISI AND CORFU.

AS a starting-point for Eastern travel, Brindisi can boast many advantages. Firstly, the shortening of the sea voyage—a sure recommendation to that large majority of Britons whose love of their ocean-empire dwindles upon increasing intimacy; secondly, the facilities offered by the Indian mail for reaching that port; and thirdly, the utter absence of inducement to linger within its walls. Few spots possess fewer attractions. Around in the dull Calabrian¹ plain no undulation relieves the wearied eye: no monument of the town's departed greatness lends an interest to the squalid streets: the harbour exhales a perfume peculiar even in that tideless sea.

¹ “*Procul obscuros colles, humilemque videmus Italiam.*”—*Virg. Æn. iii. 522.*
In this flat country it is impossible to have the feeling of being really in Italy.

The traveller leaves the railway in the omnibus of the Hôtel des Indes Orientales, and by the time he has reached that establishment and the quay, will probably have abandoned all idea of loitering upon Italian soil. He will do well to seize the earliest opportunity of adjourning to the office of the steamboat company whom he honours with his patronage. It is an axiom abroad that all tickets and similar documents are to be signed, countersigned, "visé-d," and so forth, upon every possible or impossible occasion; and he may therefore, through disregard of this maxim, find himself put to much inconvenience at the last moment. Having performed this solemn function, he should proceed on board to deposit his luggage and secure berths. There are no means of effecting this except by personal application to the steward, and "first come, first served," is the only principle regarded. He can then return to dine in peace and comfort, and beguile his leisure with an exploration of the place; only at night he may expect to spoil his nether garments by sudden plunges into the mud-holes that agreeably diversify the surface of its unpaved streets.

Local
traditions.

Two or three churches and a few dilapidated palaces comprise all the buildings of any importance; while the antiquities consist of an isolated column, known as the "Colonna Ercolea," supposed to have served anciently as a lighthouse. The importance of Brindisium was not of a kind likely to leave behind it many durable monuments. Made a Roman colony before the conclusion of the First Punic war, it became



THE ALBANIAN COAST.

the outlet for each successive Eastward movement of the rapidly advancing republic. It attained its zenith towards the end of the civil wars; and received a sort of literary consecration from Horace's amusing satire descriptive of his journey thither, as well as from being the scene of Virgil's death. The "Casa di Virgilio" is pointed out, and really may have been built not more than 1200 years later than that great poet's epoch, to judge from architectural evidence. Before the second century A.D., the greatness of the town began to wane in favour of Otranto; and total neglect under Byzantine, Norman, and Neapolitan rule, has been highly injurious to the harbour. The Italian Government have expended considerable sums upon its restoration, and there are hopes of returning prosperity. But Brindisi can never become a thing of beauty, and will be simply, as it was of old, a thoroughfare. The hotel porter complained bitterly that no one stayed there, and that his perquisites were of the smallest: nevertheless there has been contrived a most ingenious geometrically progressive system of gratuities for multiplying the expenses of a few hours' sojourn in this delightful spot, and for effectually promoting the greatest happiness of the greatest number of boatmen, waiters, porters, and general loafers.

A departure by night is, if possible, to be recommended. Albanian coast. The traveller awakes to find himself steaming along beneath the frowning Albanian coast, and if he waste no time in slumber after daybreak, may behold the Acroceraunian mountains, those "rocks of evil fame," the terror of the mariners

of antiquity—the “crag of thunder,” as their name signifies, rent and scarred by constant storms, and shrouded in mysterious gloom. The modern names, “Linguetta” and Γλωσσα, aptly describe this tongue-shaped promontory, running north-west, parallel to the general direction of the coast, together with which it forms the Gulf of Avlona. Within this bay lies the considerable town of the same name, a frequent anchorage for crusading fleets, and accessible at the present day by means of the coasting steamers. A single glance at the rugged grandeur of the Albanian mountains serves to recall and explain the horror with which the ancients regarded this inhospitable shore, even if it be beheld for the first time on a sunny still morning. A line of sheer precipices rises out of the deep blue sea, their jagged snow-sprinkled tops cutting the Eastern sky. No traces are seen of habitation or of any green thing until after a minute inspection, when here and there are revealed tiny clumps of brushwood, or a few white huts nestling against the mountain-side.

On the right soon appear two rocky islets: they are Fano and Merlera, the northern limit of the Hellenic kingdom. After passing these the boat seems to enter a gulf without visible outlet, and to be steering straight upon the cliffs; but on the right we discern a luxuriant verdure, in strange contrast with the savage desolation on our left. Suddenly we round Casopo Point, and the Canal of Corfu opens out before us. The two shores seem but a stone's-throw apart in the glorious noonday light. On the one are barren

scours ; on the other, foliage of every shade, and stretches of emerald turf running up the mountain-sides. Over all frowns Pantoerator (the Istome of Thucydidean story¹), famous as the last stronghold of the remnant of the unhappy Coreyrean oligarchy. Then the vast bay sweeps off to the right, and straight across it rise the "towers of Phaeacia,"² behind the islet of Vido, the natural breakwater of the harbour. These twin rocks together form the citadel, separated from the mainland by a deep moat—a stronghold which, before the cession of 1864, art and nature had combined to render impregnable.

The vessel anchors off the new fort, at the north of the town, to be instantly boarded by a motley, polyglot crowd. The Hôtel St Georges should be asked for, and its porter diligently sought out. It is comfortable, well situated, and inexpensive. Let the traveller luxuriate in his last taste of European life, remembering well the difference between the Ionian islands and the rest of Greece. And yet a run of thirteen hours has landed him in a new world. Strange tongues greet his ear and Eastern costumes delight his eye, side by side with English and Italian accents and the familiar garb of the West. The scholar feels a strange emotion in reading Greek legends on every shop and public building, and bethinks him of Aristophanes as he deciphers words expressive of various trades and

¹ Thuc. iii. 85, iv. 46.

² Virg. *Æn.* iii. 291—"Protinus aërias Phaeacum abscondimus arces;" although Professor Conington takes the allusion to be simply to the mountains of the island, and translates: "Phaeacia's heights from view we hide."

callings once so painfully elaborated by the aid of a lexicon, but now introduced into his own everyday experience. The formalities of the *douane* are slight, the officials professing to pass the luggage upon the "word of an Englishman;" but the said British subject is recommended to give something in addition to his word if he would secure the inviolability of his portmanteaus.

Routes into
Greece.

The length of sojourn in Corfu will be determined by the route to be adopted on leaving the island; and choice has to be made between continuing the journey in the boat that has brought us, which necessitates a voyage round the Peloponnese, and awaiting a Greek boat to take us up the Gulf of Corinth. The former alternative involves nearly three days at sea, and a departure on the morning after arrival: the latter allows a stay of three nights, and reduces the time spent at sea to about forty hours; but the dirt and discomfort of the Greek steamers will, if already experienced, act as a powerful inducement to select the longer passage. In any case, a week hardly suffices to reveal all the delights of this earthly paradise, and the traveller will never leave it without regret.

Attractions of
the island.

To those desirous of a warm wintering-place, we should say "try Corfu,"—that is, if they have regard for a perfect climate, splendid scenery, good sport, good living, and absence of "personally-conducted tourists." Passers-through there are enough to enliven existence without interfering with its freedom; letters come from home in three or four days, while we are on one of the direct lines of communication between central

and eastern Europe. The present condition of the island is as peculiar and varied as its history. Unconquered by the Moslem, save for a single year, it has owned Christian lords of every race and creed — Franks, Normans, Neapolitans, Venetians, French, and English. An outpost of our religion, it contrasts not less strangely in population than in aspect with the neighbouring mainland. Two great maritime empires have bestowed upon it the indelible impress of their enlightened rule. Four centuries of Venetian domination at least left it incomparably fertile—nay more, by direct encouragement brought into existence the splendid olive-groves that still cover its entire surface. Fifty years of British occupation bestowed every other material advantage. The roads, untouched since our departure, are still by far the best in the Greek kingdom ; the Esplanade and its surroundings are only surpassed by the Square of the Constitution at Athens. The north side is bounded by the Lord High Commissioner's palace ; the east by the citadel ; the south by the sea ; and the west by a long row of tall houses, whose projecting storeys form an arcade down its entire length. Herein the townsfolk disport themselves and the military parade : it is a significant sight to witness, as may be witnessed at the present moment,¹ some 3000 men drilling in the heart of a town which it has been expressly agreed by treaty not to garrison.

Still more peculiar was the aspect of the Esplanade on a The Carnival.

¹ April 1881.

carnival night. Though only in the first week of March, it was still and warm as in an English August; indeed the night seemed hardly colder than the day. A vast and well-dressed crowd watched the dancers upon a raised platform, or sat at tables outside the *café* doors. The proceedings were orderly to the verge of dullness, but every masquerader seemed gratified with his own costume and that of his neighbours. These were of a flimsy and tawdry kind, including caricatures of English military and naval uniforms—grotesquely contrasting with their prototypes as displayed on the persons of some marines and blue-jackets from H.M.'s Falcon, at that moment lying in the harbour. Among this motley throng walked blue-breeched *contadini* and white-kilted Albanians—splendid savages, untamed and untameable. No sign of intoxication could be detected, and the fun was not very apparent: nevertheless, up to an advanced hour of the morning, sounds of mild revelry came floating through the open windows of the St George hotel.

Opera.

As the Greek carnival was still in full fling, the theatre gave nightly representations. One of these, entitled "*Napoli di Carnevale*," was little more than a general romp. Half the audience wore masks, and the *jeunesse dorée* had licence to invade the boxes. One of these humourists, seeing two Englishmen, thought fit to pay them a visit and indulge in a little banter: but having asked, after some preliminary badinage, "*Che ora è?*" and having received the deliberate answer, "*Sono le venti cinque e mezzo*," he lost his temper

at this unlooked-for presumption on the part of unmasked persons, and rushed out shouting, "Siete degli imbecili;" but the consequence was, that the chalk sweetmeats of himself and his fellows took thenceforth another direction. In the last act the maskers all appeared upon the stage, whereon they played the fool to the top of their bent.

The High Life of Corfu imitates western Europe in its amusements, just as the people imitate it in theirs. The society of the Ionian islands is Italian in its character and language, but modified by many other influences. Greek being now the official language, is becoming very common, and English is still widely spoken. Indeed the trading classes prefer to calculate in £ s. d., and translate francs or drachmæ into our more familiar coinage. A word to the wise: not to change circular notes or letters of credit with the local agents accredited to English banks, since these gentry have a pleasing habit of giving Greek notes to the nominal value only; whereas most of the hotel-keepers and shopmen require payment in English money, but will take all kinds of English paper at par, and even change it into Greek paper, with a reasonable premium to their customers; so that unwary travellers may suffer a loss of 4 or 5 per cent by following the instructions contained in their *lettres d'indication*. These remarks of course do not apply to the Ionian Bank, which is a purely English institution, and may always be trusted to pay the full rate of exchange.

But we must return to that cosmopolitan society which

Ball at Turkish
Consulate.

has led to this digression. A ball at the Turkish consul's was decidedly interesting. It took place on the flat inhabited by his family, and was attended by Greeks, Corfiotes, Armenians, Turks, English, and representatives of various other nationalities. Almost every language was to be heard; but French or English was almost universally understood. There were several impediments to dancing, for the floors were carpeted, and only four "rounds" took place in more than as many hours, owing to various interludes, such as pianoforte recitals and periodical retirements of the orchestra to obtain refreshments. But the whole performance was to a stranger all the more agreeable on that account; every one was cordial, and many amusing. An Italian tone was traceable in the excessive importance attached to the cotillon, though the supper contrasted favourably with that provided in some even of the grandest palaces in Rome.

Natural
beauties.

But it is not in the good qualities of its inhabitants that the sole, or even the principal, attractions of Corfu consist. Every yard of its surface presents beauties of outline and of colouring, of detail and of general effect. The visitor should begin with a short walk to One-gun Point. Leaving the Esplanade and the fortifications (beneath which he will probably see the native youth disporting itself at cricket), he passes through the suburb of Kastrades, skirting the bay of that name, and enters the peninsula that separates Lake Kalikiopulo—the Hyllaic harbour of the ancients—from the Canal of Corfu. This inlet, though now far too shallow for ship-



THE OLD FORT, CORFU.

ping, must, considering its once greater depth and the lighter draught of ancient vessels, have formed a splendid basin for the famous navy of Coreyra. Upon the outer shore stands the summer palace of the Lord High Commissioner, whose English gardens, lovely in their decay, skirt the water, and afford pictures of indescribable loveliness, framed in the varied foliage of its trees. Through one opening gleams the city right across the Kastrades bay, through another a tract of the majestic Albanian coast.

Outside and beyond the "Casino," as the villa is now termed, the unenclosed country is one vast olive-forest overshadowing an undulating sea of grass, fresh as that of home, and spangled with pink anemones and other brilliant flowers. In and out the vistas of this grove the goats browse at will, the tinkling of their bells breaking the drowsy stillness of the afternoon, and here and there a white farmhouse gleams out behind the gnarled old stems. Farther down the shore is the platform of an ancient temple, believed to have been consecrated to Poseidon, commanding the same panorama as the Summer Palace. A halt in this spot led to the discovery by some peasant children that strangers were present, and a troop of these infants soon surrounded our artist—till curiosity overcame shyness, and so close a study of his efforts ensued, that his right arm came into frequent contact with the persons of his too appreciative admirers, to the great and lasting improvement of his production. About the only bad result of the English occupation is the persistency with which

the little Corfiotes beg; but this evil habit does not, as in Italy, extend to their parents.

One-gun
Point.

Wandering onwards, we reach the famous "one-gun battery," some two and a half miles from the town, whither the *beau monde* resorts at the fashionable hour. Off the Point lies a tiny rock, covered with cypresses, among which a lonely chapel is perched. It is the Isle of Ulysses—the Phæacian galley that bore him safely to his fatherland, and on its homeward way was turned into stone by the enraged and baffled Poseidon.¹ This islet has a rival claiming the honour, but the fitness of things seems fully satisfied by admitting its pretensions. It is just the spot for an anchorite of poetic mind who understands the advantage of having within easy reach the means to supply his wants. Such thoughts grow more impressive with an increasing sense of hunger, and suggest a townward movement. A carriage-road runs up the promontory through the middle of the wood; but a desire for variety enjoins a return by the shore of the Hyllaic harbour, which commands the graceful tree-clad mountains of the island, so different from the snowy peaks of the other side. And here

¹ ἡ δὲ μάλα σχεδὸν ἤλυθε ποντοπόρος νηὺς
ρίμφα διωκομένη· τῆς δὲ σχεδὸν ἦλθ' Ἐνοσίχθων,
ὅς μιν λῶαν ἔθηκε καὶ ἐρρίξωσεν ἔνερθε
χείρῃ καταπρηγεῖ ἐλάσας· ὃ δὲ νόσφι βεβήκει.

“And lo! the ship seafaring nigh to land,
Came lightly furrowing the blue waves: but he
Rose in his wrath, and with down-striking hand
Made her a stone, and in the nether sea
Clenched the dead keel with roots, and thence moved instantly.”

—Mr Worsley's translation: *Od.* xiii. 161.

it may be remarked, that Athenian time being thirty-five minutes in advance of Roman, demands of the pilgrim a corresponding adjustment of his watch ; so that the thoughtless are liable to forfeit their enjoyment of that mighty institution, the *table d'hôte*, which truly waits for no man, through neglect of this simple precaution.

Many days are required to explore the beauties of Corfu. Excursions.
 These excursions were very familiar to Englishmen twenty years ago, when the union-jack waved upon the citadel, and the now desolate palace was graced by the constant presence of British dames and the Senate of the Ionian islands. The old guides still take travellers to the picturesque villages and monasteries, where the inhabitants accord them a hearty welcome from a lively recollection of the good times gone by. The stock expeditions are, after all, the best. To ascend San Salvador—now called Pantocrator—is a creditable day's work, entailing a ten-mile row across the bay and a steep climb of 3000 feet. The southern portion of the island may be seen equally well from "Ἁγιοὶ δέκα, or "Ten Saints," better known in the "choice Italian" of the country as "Santa Decca." Santa Decca.
 The name is supposed to be a corruption of Saint Decius, who has undergone a multiplication similar to that which, out of the martyrdom of St Undecimilla, gave rise to the legend of the eleven thousand virgins at Cologne. A solitary climb up this mountain served to illustrate how deeply the instinct of the "cicerone" has sunk into the Ionian nature. A peasant working in his vineyard on the hillside perceived a stranger many

hundred feet above him. He dropped his hoe, rushed after him with indignant shouts, and overtook him near the top. Strong language and expressive pantomime alike failed to procure his departure, and he clung on like a leech for the rest of the afternoon. Eventually he received a drachma as ample compensation for this self-imposed toil and loss of time. His great idea seemed to be that the English telegraph station once standing on the highest point of the mountain must be the object of attraction: to take so much trouble for the sake of the view was an act of lunacy beyond his comprehension. But guide or no guide, it is well worth the climb to get a look at the monastery nestling in between the two chief peaks, entirely hidden from the surrounding country, but enjoying through one narrow opening a sight of the distant city.

Moreover, the charms of these mountains are accessible to the least energetic, owing to the splendid English roads that run over either range. That of San Salvador is crossed at the Pass of Pantaleone, which affords a panorama of the north and centre of Corfu; that of Santa Decca at the Pass of Garuna, opening up the south and centre. Looking across the great central plain to Pelleka, the sight grows almost weary with the endless masses of cultivation, broken only by distant glimpses of the Adriatic. At last the cause suggests itself: there is not a fence or enclosure of any kind; and the Englishman, accustomed to associate fertility with fields



VIEW OF CORFU, FROM THE GAKUNA PASS.

and hedgerows, experiences a sense of strangeness that at length gives place to one of perfect satisfaction.

Delightful is the drive back at sunset through the dense olive woods and vineyards, whence swarms of picturesque peasantry are returning to the hills: the men very handsome, the women strangely the reverse; the stronger sex invariably riding, the weaker walking by the side.

But how few of the beauties of this paradise are revealed to the hurried tourist! Its charms develop fully only after careful exploration; they are not obvious to the casual sight-seer. Whether from the sportsman's point of view, or from the artist's, two things are desirable—unlimited time and a steam yacht. The shooting on the island is not generally good: there are snipe and wild-fowl in winter, and occasional flights of woodcock; but these have to be shared with the natives, who turn out in numbers to waylay them when they land. Indeed a bad olive crop, by releasing these gentry from their ordinary autumn labours, suffices to denude the whole place of game. For good sport recourse must be had to the mainland, where wild-fowl and boar abound. Accommodation there is none; hence the inestimable advantage of being able to run backwards and forwards in an hour or so between barbarism and civilisation. A man may live as in the Highlands, combining the charms of Nature in her wildest mood with those of luxury, or, at least, domestic comfort. Besides the benefits of locomotion, a yacht affords many others

likely to commend themselves to an Englishman, such as the possession of his own dogs, guns, cartridges, and drinks,—too many, in fact, to enumerate.

Decadence
since the
cession.

Of Corfiote politics, perhaps the less said the better. All classes join in assuring us that they have never ceased to regret our departure; and when taunted with having themselves demanded it, reply that they were as children, ignorant of their true good, which ought to have been forced upon them by their fathers, the English. Indeed they hint that Mr Gladstone (whom they do not recommend to revisit their country if he have any regard to his personal safety) was aware of the injury that the cession would inflict, and brought it on them as a punishment, owing to an unreasoning hatred of the Ionians, conceived during his short administration of their islands. However this measure may have affected the inhabitants, there is little doubt of its injury to ourselves. Fortifications erected by England at the cost of a million sterling, were by herself dismantled at an outlay of many thousands; and yet, within sixteen years it was found advisable to occupy another island in the Mediterranean. The mere retention of one of the Ionian islands would have dispensed with the invidious necessity of acquiring Cyprus; and instead of setting to work to fortify and open up a barbarous and not too healthy country, England might still be keeping a hold upon one of the strongest and loveliest spots on earth, and be enjoying the fruits of the vast capital expended in roads,

aqueducts, drainage, and other material improvements. In the event of an ultimate partition of the Turkish empire, might it not be possible to induce the Greek Government to accept Cyprus, upon which it always looks with longing eyes, in exchange for one of these much smaller, but, to England, much more useful islands?

CHAPTER II.

CORFU TO ATHENS.

Hurricane.

ALL things have an end, and Corfu must be left, for the dirty little Greek steamer is about to weigh anchor. Under a rapidly freshening breeze, she slips away down the canal whose troubled waters are an earnest of what may be expected in the open sea. The citadel sinks below the horizon, and the sun goes down in lurid brightness behind Santa Decca. Not long afterwards a tremendous motion announces that Cape Lefkimo is passed. At about ten o'clock, with an appalling crash all the sleepers on the saloon sofas come down on to the floor; and for some minutes human beings, luggage, and furniture are flying to and fro, in and out of the open doors of the cabins. Passengers rise and begin to dress, probably to preserve decency in death; others embrace the legs of the fixed table, and, like St Paul and his fellow-voyagers in the same waters, lie there and "wish for the day." Santa Maura is at last rounded and the danger passed; but the gale continues, so that, on dropping anchor

in Argostoli harbour, we find that well-sheltered bay as white as snow. Day is breaking, and we get a good view of Cephalonia. It is the largest and least interesting of these islands, presenting a bare treeless appearance very different from Corfu. Monte Nero, though nearly 5000 feet high, has no grandeur like "San Salvador." Argostoli lies in a creek to the south of the great bay, out of sight of the open sea. There is a story that once the French fleet lying in this creek escaped the keen observation of Lord Nelson, who actually sailed into the gulf in search of it. Yet even this land-locked water is so rough that for two hours no boat dares put off from the shore; and then, because we are already extremely late, the captain insists upon landing the cargo and passengers in a most leisurely manner, at no time employing more than a single boat for that purpose, and wasting three more hours over the operation.

We now begin to realise the *agréments* of a Greek steamer, which in the misery of the night had to some extent escaped notice; for, as Homer truly observes —

" I hold no ill is greater than the sea
To crush a man, how brave soe'er he be."¹

But henceforth we have leisure to notice the uncleanness above and the unsavoury perfume below, which, as no ventilation is permitted, becomes almost unbearable before the end

¹ Od. viii. 138:—

οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγέ τί φημι κακώτερον ἄλλο θαλάσσης
ἄνδρα γε συγχεῖναι, εἰ καὶ μάλα καρτερὸς εἴη.

of the journey. In the next place, the food is both bad and dear, not being included in the passage-money, but being provided on private speculation by the steward. Moreover, no account is taken of numbers, so that the traveller is liable to find himself shut up for a couple of days with a crowd as great as on a Boulogne steamer in Easter week. Again, every class of passenger has free access to all parts of the deck, and *palikaris* of the rudest type press curiously round the foreigner. Finally, time being absolutely no object, the captain scoffs at the idea of starting one moment before he has seen his friends and executed his little commissions in each place. One entertaining form of practical joke is to announce dinner, say for seven, and then, when a hearty lunch has been eaten, to change the time to five, and absolutely to decline to serve anything after that hour. Probably these abuses will give birth to their own remedy. The English merchants of Athens and Constantinople are already about to get up a through communication, to be managed on English principles—that is to say, with some regard to cleanliness and punctuality: the Company further purposes to run straight from Corfu to Loutraki, and thus to bring Athens within two days of Italy.

Zante.

When all excuses for delay are exhausted, we move across to Lixouri, on the other side of the gulf, and depart at 11.30, six hours behind time. A roughish run brings us, at 3 P.M., to Zante, a long narrow town, picturesquely skirting the shore of a semicircular bay, backed by Mount Skopos and the citadel.

If Corfu be described as an olive-grove, this island may be called a garden, though its luxuriance is less apparent at a distance, except in summer, when the scent of its million flowers is wafted far away across the water. Some delay occurs in consequence of the hesitation of an unfortunate Greek family to break its journey and forfeit the passage-money; but since two of its members have burst blood-vessels during the storm, they yield to medical advice, and are landed. Then away to Patras, through a sea of foam, under a brilliant Eastern starlight, not a single cloud having appeared since the gale began yesterday afternoon. At last many lights signal an approach to a large town: the boat heaves to, and is immediately overrun by a piratical-looking crowd of harbour-men. Under such circumstances, it is well not to leave luggage on deck, on account of the rapidity wherewith everything is cleared away by the marauders. Patras.

Day breaks upon the mountains of the Corinthian gulf, and anchor is cast off Loutraki, a port on the isthmus—if indeed a landing-stage and *raki*-shop can be dignified with that title. Immediately upon our reaching the shore, some fresh *facketie* of the Greek Steamboat Company make themselves felt. The contract is, that all passengers shall be conveyed across in the Company's omnibus; but in point of fact, the only vehicle owned by them—a sort of dilapidated hearse without perceptible doors or windows—is seized upon by some knowing natives, and the greater part of the travellers are left high and dry with their effects upon the beach. The best course Loutraki.

is to waive legal rights and hire a carriage, which, even in that short distance of five miles, will inevitably halt in order to water the horses and fortify the driver; nor will any remonstrances on the part of the impatient, unbreakfasted fare avail to produce the slightest acceleration.

Kalamaki.

But this righteous indignation became as nothing when Kalamaki was found steamerless: the corresponding boat from Syra had feared to put off in the recent squall, and some forty passengers collected together, hopelessly gazing over the now unruffled waters of the Saronic Gulf. A little ψάρι, or boiled fish, is the first necessity, after which the English mind begins

Inaccessibility
of the capital.

to revolve plans for proceeding on its way. Athens being only fifty miles distant by land, it naturally occurs to us that driving there is a possibility; and a Jehu promptly offers to accomplish that feat within ten hours, in consideration of a sum of 100 drachmæ. A curious professional etiquette causes all his brethren to retire from the field, and removes all chance of bringing into play the noble principle of competition. But hereupon interposes an agent of the Steamboat Company, declaring the notion to be a perfect absurdity, since up to Megara there is no road at all; to which fact testify the expressive countenances of the entire population, who, hearing of the proposed expedition, crowd round and stare upon the "lords" with much the same kind of pitying curiosity as might be bestowed upon travellers about to set out for the North Pole. The contending interests now clash with a frightful commotion,—the drivers urging departure; the agent,

innkeeper, and other natives clamouring for the honour of retaining us. We remain perfectly passive until a further complication arises from the interposition of the gendarmerie, who decline to permit us to start without an escort. This decides us; for a night in the open, with the chance of a visit from brigands, is even worse than abiding with forty persons in a filthy two-roomed *khani*. Of course, to improve the position, the telegraph-wire is broken, and a messenger has to walk six or seven miles to Corinth in order to send off a strongly-worded dispatch to the authorities at Athens.

The day being glorious, and to be got through somehow, an expedition to Acro-Corinthus naturally suggests itself; but the Company's agent absolutely refuses to sanction any such measure, on the ground that a vessel might come to our rescue at any moment, so that all schemes for improving these shining hours of idleness have to be abandoned. At length arrives a message to the effect that the Government, learning that there are Englishmen in this sorry plight, will despatch a gunboat to bring them off. The interval is beguiled by an exploration The isthmus. of the isthmus,—a sandy flat covered with bushes, but picturesquely intersected by deep ravines, said to be the remains of Nero's attempt to cut a canal through it. From the centre both seas are visible,—the Gulf of Corinth as far as its entrance: half-way down stand, like gigantic sentinels on either side, the snowy masses of Cyllene and Parnassus. The Saronic Gulf exhibits every hill, creek, and island as plainly as in a map,—Salamis, Ægina, and the rugged mountains of the Argolid. It

was just the situation for realising how near in distance, yet how mutually inaccessible, were the cities of ancient Hellas,—an all-important consideration for explaining the intensity and narrowness of local feeling so ineradicable among the Greek race.

The Pyrrhic
dance.

Towards sunset we return to Kalamaki, and having dined off old fish and new lamb, turn out on to the beach to witness a Pyrrhic dance. This performance consists of every one's joining hands in a circle, and making first a step to the right and then a step to the left, varied by an occasional lurch inwards towards the centre; sometimes the performers all squat down upon the floor, and sometimes take three or four steps consecutively in the same direction, so that by the end of half an hour the circle is nearly completed: all this to a kind of dirge, consisting of howls and grunts in various proportions—which sounds, indeed, subsequently proved to be the foundation of all Greek music. During the whole time a sort of dish-cloth was passed from one “dancer” to another, and we learnt afterwards that they call unto each other, saying, “I have left my black handkerchief in your back-yard; tell me, have you seen it?”—whence the song receives its name of Μαῖπο Ἀμπέχορο, or Black Scarf. No amount of “glasses round” availed to alter the proceedings, or to impart the slightest liveliness thereto; neither could any of these gallant *palikaris* be induced to favour us with a Klephtic ballad. The word *palikari*, it may be observed, meaning literally “boy,” but practically “warrior,” is applied to all who wear the

national costume—much as in Ireland we hear of the “boys,” or in England of “sportsmen,” in the widest and most slangy sense of that term.

A fresh episode relieves the monotony of the Pyrrhic dance, in the shape of the arrival of the Athens post. This institution, called τὸ ταχυδρομεῖον, “the quick-runner,” presumably because it takes twenty-four hours to accomplish the fifty miles, proved of high interest, as bringing newspapers containing a notice of the sudden dissolution of the British Parliament. Loud and vehement were the hopes expressed that the iniquitous Lord Beaconsfield had reached the term of his power.

Arrival of
the mail.

At length, at 8.30 a light appears moving slowly up the bay, and turns out to belong to the gunboat Syra, kindly sent to make up for the shortcomings of the Company, who would have left us there indefinitely, so far as they themselves were concerned. An enormous crowd goes on board, and instantly curls up and goes to sleep—a little awkward at first, seeing that at every step the deck seems to move and growl beneath one's feet. On going for our rugs, we find a countryman comfortably wrapped up in each. The captain is all civility, and puts his berth at our disposal—an offer which, in consideration of the crowded state of the cabins, we decline with thanks. Deck is by far the best place, whence we watch the glass-like, phosphorescent sea, and the outlines of capes and islands dimly looming in the starlight. The contrast with last night is incredible; but the sudden rise and fall of

Revival
of hope.

Mediterranean storms have been too well portrayed by ancient poets to bear description here.

Piræus. The Piræus at 1.30 A.M., and an invasion of rascality rendering almost impossible the preservation of property. Everything is at length got into a boat, excepting one valise, which, being nearly new, had been carried off, as it afterwards turned out, by a young Corfiote, who left in its place an antiquated article of his own, bursting at every seam, and filled with refuse clothing. A fruitless search of nearly an hour did not sweeten our feelings towards the author of this mistake, who next morning put the matter into the hands of the police, and having heard through their means where the sufferers resided, coolly sent round a request that they would "restore" his property, retaining theirs meanwhile as a hostage, and adding no single word of apology. In fact, we learnt subsequently to deem ourselves fortunate to have escaped being arrested on a charge of theft.

The traveller, on reaching Piræus, should put himself in charge of one of the regular hotel guides who meet all the steamers, and whose function it is to see strangers safely landed and deposited at their destination. At length, at 2.30 we are packed into a fly with one of these not too fragrant gentry, the luggage occupying the whole exterior, and so leave the quay. Immense is the indignation at an almost immediate halt, in order to "change horses," which, for a distance of five miles, seems somewhat unreasonable to famished and weary men. But the guide explains that after this operation we shall

Habits of
Greek Jehus.

go "so fast, oh so fast!" so we submit, and move off along the road through the frosty night-air. We start from meditation at another stoppage—this time to "water the horses," apparently an inevitable interlude during any drive, however short. But British patience has been tried once too often, and the driver is sternly told that if he gets down, his carriage will find its way to Athens without him. Seeing that his customers are not in a mood to be trifled with, he sullenly remounts the box and goes on. The Hotel d'Angleterre is reached at 3.15 A.M., where, in spite of preparatory telegrams, there is only one room ready for the accommodation of two travellers, with one sleepy menial in attendance, who neither has food prepared, nor sees his way to getting any. This unexpected announcement produces so energetic a flow of language as to induce him to think better of it; after which exhausted nature sinks into oblivion.

CHAPTER III.

ATHENS OF THE PAST.

Hotels.

THE peculiar character of the Athenian hotels did not become fully apparent until next day. They are in many respects excellent, but are calculated to secure the comfort of residents rather than that of tourists. The numbers of the latter are so small comparatively, as to reduce them to a position of insignificance. The bulk of the inhabitants are Greeks—for private houses are still few and expensive; so that most of those whom politics, pleasure, or other business call to the capital, prefer to live *en pension* at the large hotels. Deputies with their families, young married people addicted to society, merchants from every country in Europe, form the principal *clientèle*, and offer a varied subject-matter for the stranger's observation. Very few of these have private sitting-rooms, and still fewer feed except at the stated meal-times; so that, when the crowd became great, and two persons were sleeping on the billiard-table, and the ladies' saloon had been converted into an extra dining-room, it followed

that down-stairs accommodation was very limited—an annoyance greatly aggravated on wet or snowy days, when no native dreamt of going out, and the fumes of tobacco in the unventilated apartments became unbearable to two or three English ladies who happened to be staying there. The smokers, on being informed of this and requested to leave one apartment untobaccoed, were polite but incredulous, declaring that no ladies really minded smoke, but only thought it the right thing to pretend to do so. These considerations explained the strange difficulty originally experienced in obtaining any attention during the small hours of the morning, and taught us that Athens hotels, though passable enough to those who conform to their ordinary times and habits, are in their arrangements singularly inelastic.

Such reflections are but a mean inauguration to a sojourn in the capital of ancient art and learning; yet, although they perforce thrust themselves into prominence, nowhere else are they so easily dispelled. Athens is one of the very few places whose first appearance produces no sense of disappointment. Not growing gradually familiar like Rome, but bursting in upon us like a long-forgotten friend, it needs but the first glimpse to be, as it were, indelibly photographed in the mind. The new town is providentially built to the north and east of the more famous quarters of the ancient city, so that the imagination has little to undo; it need merely reconstruct, and that on a site possessing extraordinarily prominent natural features.

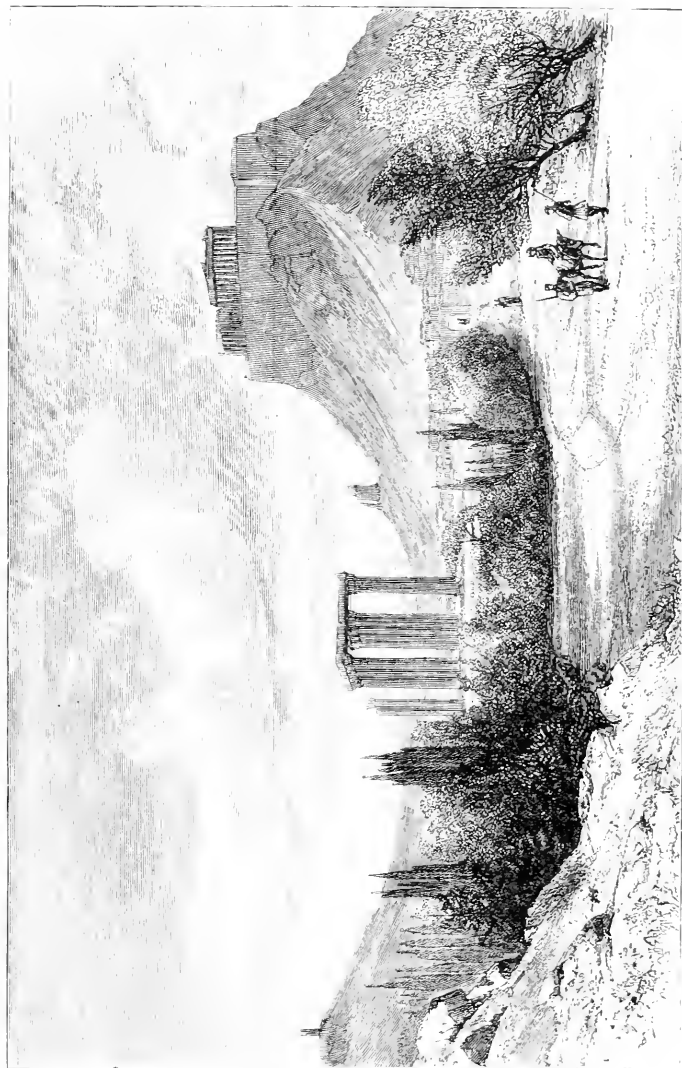
First impressions.

Arch of
Adrian.

Temple of
Olympian
Zeus.

After crossing the Square of the Constitution, which contains all the best hotels, such as the Grande Bretagne and the Angleterre, and leaving it on its southern side, a pleasant boulevard leads to the Arch of Adrian and the Temple of Olympian Zeus. The former edifice needs but few remarks: it is a strange, heterogeneous erection of two tiers some fifty feet high, bearing an inscription that "on one side, the south-east, lies Adrian's town; on the other, the ancient town, that of Theseus." On the former stands the remains of the costly temple that Adrian had the credit of completing. The original number of columns appears to have been twenty-two by ten, which, counting a double row on either side, and a triple row on either face, gives the enormous total of 124. Of these, only fourteen are standing,—thirteen all together and still supporting their architrave; the other is picturesquely isolated, while a fifteenth lies complete upon the ground, but with its drums shaken into confusion by the fall. The remainder have been broken up for building material, or burnt into lime by an appreciative population. The stupendous size of the building may be inferred from Pausanias' statement that it had a circumference of four stadia,¹ or nearly half a mile. But deeply as we regret the loss of so striking an evidence of Roman magnificence, we may yet feel thankful that it is upon this gorgeous, composite, over-decorated building that destruc-

¹ These measurements would include the platform upon which the building stood. Pausanias states that the *περίβολος* was "full of statues," so that it perhaps extended a greater distance than usual beyond the peristyle.



THE ACROPOLIS AND TEMPLE OF OLYMPIAN ZEUS.

tion has fallen, rather than upon such genuine models of Greek art as the Parthenon and Theseum. The Coliseum alone, were all other such vestiges swept away, would give ample testimony to the grandeur of Imperial Rome; but had the Athenian temples of the fifth century disappeared, the modern world could scarcely realise what Greek architecture was under its most favourable conditions.

Hard by the columns of Olympian Zeus winds the now The Ilissus. dried-up channel of the Ilissus,¹ beside whose murmuring waters, under the waving plane-trees, Socrates loved to sit and talk. Here, too, legend narrates that the maiden Orithyia was at play when Boreas, the North-Wind god, carried her off to share his home, and for her sake loved Athens so dearly that he shattered the Persian ships at Salamis, and saved the city from slavery. But stream and plane-trees are alike vanished; and the sceptical modern concurs in the Platonic rationalisation of the myth—viz., that a blast of extra violence carried the hapless virgin over a neighbouring crag, an explanation which the gusts of Boreas caused us readily to accept, and indeed very nearly to illustrate in our own unhappy persons. Here, too, is the poetic fountain of Callirrhoe, a sort of cave in the river-bed, whence a little Callirrhoe. jet still oozes up; but the feelings were sorely tried on finding it in possession of half-a-dozen old women busily engaged in washing their dirty linen. It may be here remarked, that Greek women are perpetually washing without

¹ Paus. i. xix. Plato, *Phædrus*. 229. 230.

producing the smallest visible effect upon any thing or person whatever.

The Stadium. A little higher up the Ilissus' bed, on the farther side from the city, is the Stadium, cut out in a natural hollow between two hills. Its square end rests upon the river-bank; at the other or semicircular extremity is a curious tunnel cut through the hill to the east. Some scholiast sagely suggests that its object was to enable the beaten competitors to retire without facing popular derision. The whole of this vast hollow was lined with white marble by Herodes Atticus¹—a work that, as Pausanias informs us, almost exhausted the quarries of Pentelicus.

The Acropolis. The Ilissus and its banks invite no long delay. The beauty has departed, and the traveller gladly turns to that rock whose sacred glories time cannot efface. In the Acropolis is summed up all that is most noble in Greek art. Dilapidated indeed it is, but not through natural causes; and there are few more maddening thoughts than those inspired by the knowledge that two centuries ago the Parthenon and Erechtheum were almost perfect, and have been shattered not during the darkness of the middle ages, but in the full light of modern times. Yet even in decay it is passing wonderful, an ample repayment for hardships undergone in journeying to Athens. By passing beneath the southern cliff, the entrance is reached without a preliminary transit through the squalid hovels that skirt the rock on the side of the modern town. The

¹ Paus. i. xix.



THE ACROPOLIS, FROM THE PNYX.

road winds up between gigantic aloes to a wooden gate that opens after some prolonged knocking. A path brings us out into the open space between the ancient entry and the Propylæa.

In front of the right flank of the latter, poised on a projecting rock, stands the beautiful little temple of the Wingless Victory. This *bijou* shrine (about 27 feet by 18) has had a curious history. The Turks, when besieged by Morosini, desiring to erect a battery on its site, entirely demolished it, and its memory almost died away; but the Greek Government stumbled upon the fragments, and finding them complete, was able to re-erect the building, so that it now has the honour of being the only perfect specimen of an Ionic temple. The orientation corresponds with that of no other edifice on the Acropolis,—one proof among many of the value attached by Greek architects to the effect of studied irregularity. The winglessness of the goddess was understood as a token that she would never more fly away from Athens. Our chatty guide Pausanias¹ informs us that “on the right of the Propylæa is the shrine of Victory without Wings. From thence the sea is visible; and there, as the story goes, Ægeus flung himself down and perished.” This was on the occasion of Theseus, his son’s return from Crete. An agreement had been made that, in the event of his triumph, the vessel that bore him home should carry white sails. But the loss of

Temple of
Nike Apteros.

¹ Paus. i. xxii. 5: Ἐν τεύθειν ἡ θάλασσά ἐστι σύνοπτος· καὶ ταύτῃ ρίψας Ἄιγιεὺς ἑαυτὸν, ὡς λέγουσιν, ἐτελεύτησεν.

Ariadne had rendered her lover oblivious of other considerations, and the black sails, with which the good ship had sailed forth on her dismal mission, remained unchanged. The wretched father, taking this for a sign that his son had fallen a prey to the voracious Minotaur, made away with himself, a victim to filial negligence. There is some doubt whether Pausanias means that the old man flung himself down from the rock on which the little temple stands, or only into the sea at the point visible from that rock. The text rather inclines to the former interpretation: the derivation of the name *Ægean Sea* from this catastrophe points to the latter.

The Propylæa. We now find ourselves upon the steps leading to the Propylæa, a magnificent staircase of white marble some 75 feet in width. From the ancient gateway up to the spot where we stand, the steps seem to have run continuously along the entire breadth. From thence, up to the Propylæa, they are broken in the centre by a hollow roadway, a steep incline paved with roughened slabs of marble, not unlike the "Salite" so common in Genoa. It appears that animals entered from the side, like the modern visitor, and therefore only required to mount about one-half of the staircase; and it was for their accommodation that the roadway was made. The Propylæa have been fully described in many architectural writings. Suffice it to say, that the idea inspiring their erection was no less grand than its execution. The whole sacred platform of the Acropolis having become one vast temple, that vast temple was to have an entrance like any single shrine.

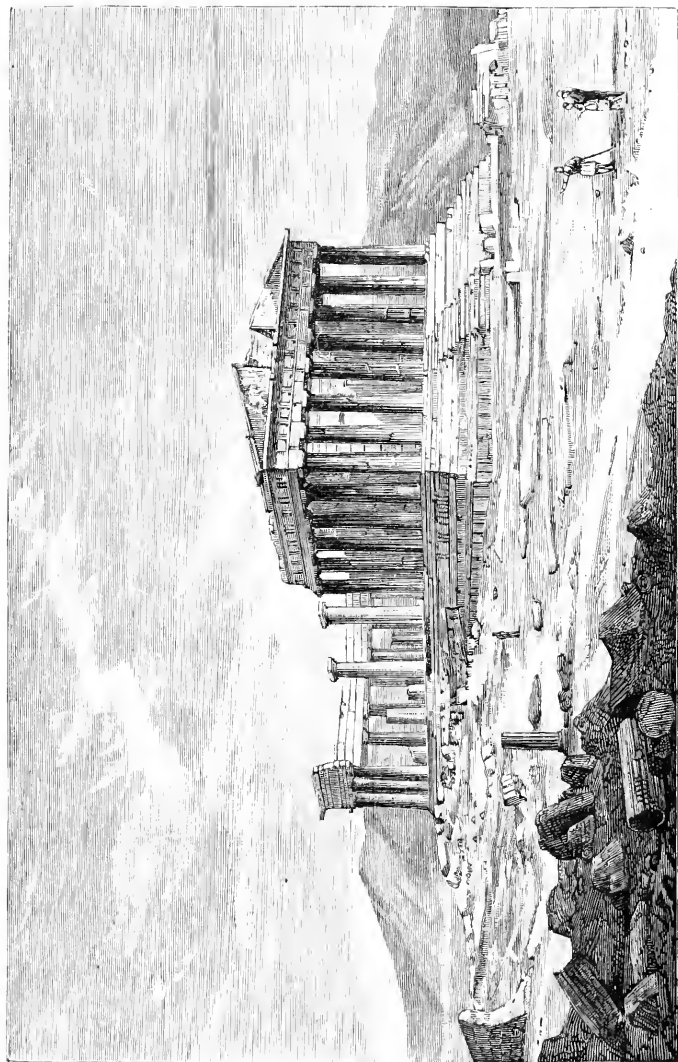
So, under the Periclean administration, Mnesicles carried out a work of equal simplicity and grandeur, of which Pausanias merely says that in its beauty and in the size of its stones it surpassed all buildings up to his time. It stood, like so many other Greek monuments, until little more than two hundred years ago. A flash of lightning blew up the powder-magazine that had been established within it; yet even this shock was stoutly resisted by the massive masonry, and little beyond the roof perished at the moment. But the hand of destruction having thus obtained a grip, has continued its work down to very recent times. Of the six Doric columns of the frontage, only two retain their capitals: the six Ionic columns lining the vestibule are entirely overthrown—a matter for the deepest regret, since large specimens of that order are extremely rare. The walls of the vestibule are still standing: there are five doorways at the back, corresponding with the intervals between the six Doric columns of either front. Those of the inner façade are nearly perfect, and two retain a piece of architrave. All round is a confused mass of *débris*—capitals, drums, and blocks of the entablature, many being monoliths of over 20 feet in length. Going back to the outer front, we find it flanked by three projecting columns on either hand: these are Doric, and smaller than their neighbours; only those on the left side remain. They form a portico to a chamber of considerable size, once the picture-gallery of the Acropolis, and stored with the masterpieces of the Hellenic pencil. It is now choked with fragments discovered on the

Acropolis, heaped together in the promiscuous style characteristic of Greek museums.

The ruins of the Propylea now form a sufficiently harmonious whole since the removal of the hideous Venetian tower on the right-hand side. One blot still remains in the shape of a pedestal formerly supporting a colossal statue of Agrippa, son-in-law of Augustus. This pedestal, whereon his name is still legible, is some 30 feet high, and consequently out of all proportion to its surroundings. When surmounted by the figure, it must have sadly dwarfed the Propylea. But no one would venture to suggest the removal of any monument of the Augustan age, so we can only try and think it away when mentally restoring that glorious entry.

The Par-
thenon.

Passing within the hallowed precincts and over the ruined basements of Artemis Brauronia and Athene Ergane, the visitor moves straight upon the west front of the Parthenon. The pediment at this end was covered with sculptures depicting the contest between Athene and Poseidon; but Venetian cannon has destroyed all except two figures said to represent Cecrops seated, with his daughter kneeling at his feet. The corresponding group at the eastern end set forth the birth of the goddess: it has suffered even more heavily from the explosion of 1687, and two horses, now in the British Museum, are the only extant specimens of this grand work, wrought probably by no less a hand than that of Phidias himself. The metopes of either side represented the fight of the Centaurs and Lapithæ: those that survived the



THE PARTHENON (WEST FRONT).

explosion are in the British Museum, as is also the famous frieze of the cella containing the Panathenaic procession. Of The frieze. course, Englishmen have the vandalism of Lord Elgin cast in their teeth, and are asked if they are not ashamed of retaining in the fogs of Bloomsbury that which is the rightful property of a rising and patriotic people. But Greece's treatment of such antiquities as she still possesses is scarcely so enlightened as to induce civilised nations to surrender priceless treasures to her tender mercies. Lord Elgin's spoliation, *pax* Lord Byron, though rudely and unskilfully carried out, has yet been the means of preserving that little which had escaped the ravages of gunpowder and round-shot, of Turkish engineers and Hellenic patriots; and even if those remnants seem slightly incongruous in their smoky London domicile, they are at any rate accessible to lovers of art as they could never have been in their original home. The ruined, time-stained temple loses nothing by their absence, and it is absurd to speak of their removal as though they had been torn freshly coloured from the perfect shrine. They were spared the horrors of the war of independence, and our only regret need be the ignorant and barbarous fashion in which their displacement was effected. The English Government has tried to make some amends for its alleged injustice by presenting very handsome casts of all the Elgin marbles to the museum of the Acropolis; but it is not the way of the natives to acknowledge these little courtesies.

Of the building as it now stands, it may suffice to say that

it has been cut in two by the blowing up of the Turkish powder-magazine in 1687, whereby the east or principal front has suffered far more severely than the other. The division of the cella into two chambers of unequal length is still traceable; and towards the back of the outer, or *váos* proper, is discernible the base whereon stood Phidias' splendid gold and ivory statue of the goddess. The western and smaller apartment formed the *δπισθόδομος*, wherein the public treasury was established. Beautiful the ruin looks from every point of view, and for the architect would provide months of study.

Colouring of
sculpture.

This is not an occasion to enter into the vexed question of how far colour was employed upon ancient statues and buildings: the supposed traces discovered in the Parthenon seem due not to man but to nature, which has dyed the marble with a deep orange; but any one who has seen the palace and other new marble buildings will hesitate to allow that so artistic a race could have endured the dazzling effect of stones fresh quarried on Pentelieus. The eye positively aches in the marble-paved streets of to-day; and if allowance be made for the difference between the Attic atmosphere and our own, there can hardly be a doubt, even irrespectively of historical corroboration, that colour was in most cases largely employed, alike to relieve the sight and to set off the elaborate details of statuary whose lofty position precluded any but a comparatively distant inspection.

The Erech-
theum.

Opposite the Parthenon, on the northern brow of the rock, stands the more curious and scarcely less interesting "Erech-



THE PARTHENON (EAST FRONT).

theum," a block of buildings comprising at least two temples, and once containing all that was mystic and ancient among the sacred things of Athens. The original and prehistoric Erechtheum was, with the older Parthenon, utterly destroyed by the Persians; but the sacred olive-tree¹ that grew therein is said to have sprouted up from its charred and blackened stump two cubits' length in a single day. Over this tree was built the shrine of Athene Polias,—“guardian of the city,”—in which, or at least under the roof of which, were three altars, sacred to Poseidon, to the hero Butus, and to Hephestus. On the first of these, sacrifice was also made to Erechtheus; and this was the only share in the rites allotted to the original builder. Within was also a well of salt water, said to have gushed forth at a blow from Poseidon's trident, when the sea-god was contending with Athene for the lordship of the country. There, too, was the lamp of Callimachus, which, though burning night and day, required to be replenished with oil but once a-year; and there was the image of Athene that fell from heaven, and an archaic wooden statue of the god Hermes. Adjoining the temple or temples just mentioned is the Pandroseum, sacred to the nymph Pandrose, who alone of her sisters had the gift of reticence. The others made revelations seriously compromising the reputation of the virgin goddess, and suffered the just penalty of their indiscretion. The one faithful found received eternal honours side by side with her grateful protectress.

¹ Herod. viii. 55.

The different levels of these buildings and their irregular shape prove them to have been built to cover ground containing more than one traditionally hallowed spot. The eastern portico consisted of six Ionic columns, five of which—still standing—constitute the finest extant specimens of the order. The northern, likewise Ionic, has perished, and gave access to the Pandroseum. In the southern, the place of columns is taken by the six celebrated female figures known as Caryatides, usually held to represent the maidens of Carye—a Medising town of the Peloponnese, whose inhabitants were reduced to slavery by their indignant neighbours after the defeat of the Persian invasion—but more probably merely typical of the sacred maidens employed in the worship of the goddess.

Half-way between the Erechtheum and the Propylæa is a platform, or rather a square flat portion of the rock itself, whereon once stood the most conspicuous object in that vast shrine of art. This was the statue of Athene Promachos, The Defender, cast in bronze by Phidias, and towering far above every surrounding building. There stood the goddess with spear and agis, keeping watch and ward over the home of her choice, and her lance's point and helmet's crest were the first objects that flashed back the sun's rays as they appeared above the ridge of Hymettus.

One glance round shows that even now the glory has not all departed; for nature at least may yet be seen in her old magnificence. To the north is the Parnes range, blended

with Cithæron, over which gleam the white summits of Parnassus. Pentelicus towers on the north-east, and Hymettus to the south-east, showing every shrub on their rugged sides; for ten miles or so seem as nothing through the liquid Attic air. To the west is the sea, with Salamis and Ægina, once Athens' eyesore; and beyond rise the mountains of the Peloponnese. At our feet is the modern city, with the tall rock of Lycabettus frowning over the royal palace; and farther on is the vast olive-grove that covers much of the Attic plain, with its trees of unknown antiquity. The white steam of the Piræus railway alone breaks its repose, and shows that life is not quite extinct in a district once studded with the country houses of Athenian citizens.

The outer aspect of the Acropolis is hardly less instructive than the interior, and a close study of its walls might afford matter for a long archaeological treatise. Faint traces are still discernible of the old Pelasgic walls—*i.e.*, constructions of tolerably well-fitted polygonal blocks. Their demolition by Xerxes rendered necessary a total refortification; and they must not be confused with the "Pelasgic" wall, the name given to that built by Themistocles on the northern face, because overlooking the region called τὸ πελασγικόν, or Quarter of the Pelasgi,—apparently assigned in prehistoric times to those puzzling aborigines. In spite of many subsequent alterations, its surface still shows us drums of columns and fragments of ancient entablature, proving the haste with which the rebuilding was conducted out of the materials

Walls of the
Acropolis.

readiest to hand. Fragments of masonry of every epoch occur in all parts of the circumvallation. The western wall bears the name of Valerian, the southern that of Cimon.

From the base of the last we can scramble down into the two great theatres and their connecting arcade. The Odeum of Herodes Atticus, built under the Antonines, is not of high interest to the student of Hellenic architecture, except in so far as the preservation of the walls of the "scena" throws light upon the conditions of the ancient drama generally. Between the Odeum and the Theatre of Bacchus stretches the long portico of Eumenes, erected by that potentate and Attalus, of which there are some twenty-eight arches remaining.

The Dionysic theatre calls up a host of associations, for we are on the very spot that witnessed the birth of the ancient drama,—at any rate, of that drama as we know it. Here Æschylus and Sophocles competed for the tragic crown, and here Aristophanes and Menander produced their unrivalled situations of broad burlesque or light comedy. Most of the decorations date from the time of Adrian; but since the old traditions were then a living power, we may rest assured that all the original arrangements were carefully reproduced. In the lowest tier are fifty marble seats in almost perfect preservation, each inscribed with the name of the official for whose use it was intended. In the centre sat the priest of Dionysus Eleutherius, the god to whom the theatre was dedicated. On his right sat the priest of Zeus, "guardian of the town;" and on his left the Exegetes, or interpreter of the sacred laws. All



TEMPLE OF THESEUS.

round the semicircle the stalls extend, and even in the second and third rows inscriptions show that the places were all "reserved." A sight of this most interesting spot disposes of some of the nonsense instilled into the youthful mind,—such as that the actor, in appealing to sun, sky, and sea, would actually point to each object in succession; for although the two first would undoubtedly be available in an unroofed place, yet the third was as certainly out of his ken, unless he could turn his back upon the audience and see through a block of building and two or three small bills.

Apart from the Acropolis and its slopes, Athens boasts but a single ancient building of first-rate importance. This is the celebrated but probably misnamed Temple of Theseus. Descending from the citadel and rounding the Areopagus, we approach this beautiful shrine, and are surprised to find how very small it is, its length being considerably less than one-half that of the Parthenon. This result is due to the exquisite harmony of its proportions, backed by an excellent situation. Still untouched by the encroachments of the modern town, it occupies a position of complete isolation; and, as first seen by the traveller entering Athens along the Piræus road, it stands out undwarfed by contrast with any neighbouring object. An example of the most graceful fifth-century Doric, it is also the most perfectly preserved Greek temple in the world. Nothing is wanting but the sculptures and roof, and the latter has been restored in recent times. The east front appears to have portrayed some of the labours of Hercules, and the west

Temple of
Theseus.

front and sides the exploits of Theseus; but whether the two friends received joint-worship within these walls, or whether—as is more probable—the original edifice was erected by Theseus in honour of Hercules, and consequently called the Theseum, is a matter hardly worth the research bestowed upon it. The analogy of the Erechtheum seems to point to the second conclusion.

Tower of the
Winds.

Other antiquities are the Tower of the Winds, an octagonal marble building of about 100 A.D. It stands under the north escarpment of the Acropolis, from whence apparently was drawn the water to work the *clepsydra* or water-clock, traces of which are still discernible in the form of channels cut in the pavement. The place was evidently a sort of Greenwich Observatory, where variations of wind and temperature were duly registered, and the correct time was ascertainable. But the many loafers who assisted at our inspection proved no better qualified than the most pedantic of scholars to explain its principles and mode of working.

Arch of
Athene
Archegetis.

Close by is an isolated archway, vulgarly called the Gate of the Agora: but in the first place, the ancient Agora was not in this quarter; and in the second, an inscription proves it to have been raised by Julius and Augustus in honour of Athene Archegetis.

Stoa of
Adrian.

Not far off is a colonnade supported by seven Corinthian columns, the remnant of an enormous cloister, enclosing a quadrangular gymnasium with its accessory buildings. It is now degraded into forming part of the wall of the cavalry

barrack-square; while on the other side is the market, a singularly mal-odorous oriental bazaar. All this part of the town consists of mean, densely packed houses, with irregular mud-paved streets; but fortunately, no other interesting part of the ancient city underlies any modern site. Wedged into the backyards of some of these hovels are remains of the Portico of Attalus, chiefly in the form of unrecognisable fragments of masonry. The inhabitants are duly impressed with a vague sense of their enormous antiquarian value, and, having pointed out some most uninteresting Roman inscription, hopefully expect a considerable *bakshesh*.

Portico of
Attalus.

Of little more interest than these last is the conspicuous ruin perched upon a height near the Acropolis, and known as the tomb of Philopappos, the Syrian. Enough is left to testify to the strangely composite character of its concave façade.

Tomb of
Philopappos.

Very different is the unpretentious little Choregic monument of Lysicrates on the opposite side of the Acropolis. Its date, 355 B.C., at once commands attention; moreover, there is no other extant specimen of the kind. Well-informed persons will pardon a word of explanation. The χορηγία, or furnishing a chorus in the annual dramatic competitions, was one of the various "public services" that the Athenians delighted to impose upon their wealthier fellow-citizens. The *choregus* was practically manager,—in so far, that is, as he was responsible for the *mise en scène* and appointments generally. With several poets contending for the tragic or comic crown, a healthy spirit of emulation arose also between the respective

Choregic mon-
ument of
Lysicrates.

choregi, which spirit was fostered by the award of a bronze tripod to the manager who had given the most universal satisfaction by his magnificence and good taste. Upon this little marble *rotunda*, with its Corinthian columns and highly decorated frieze, Lysicrates, proud of his victory, elevated the prize tripod.

The above is an imperfect description of the ancient buildings of Athens ; but, as a catalogue, it is tolerably exhaustive. To many their fewness is startling, and the disappointment is not diminished on learning that this small number is about equal to that of all others in the entire Hellenic kingdom. But the worth of such objects admits not of a numerical standard ; and although a Cook's tourist might "do" Athens in a single day, and despise it proportionately, it is certain that weeks would not exhaust its capabilities for a lover of Greek art or literature. Neither do her ancient monuments constitute more than a small part of the pleasure of a visit to Greece. In spots where no stone is left standing on another, the traveller often feels that he is on holy ground, and satisfies long-felt cravings by gazing on the scenes of mighty events and the sites of famous cities. Such is the sensation evoked by a walk down to Piræus, or an ascent of the Museum Hill, the Areopagus, or the Pnyx. True it is that the little platform on the last, with its six clean-cut steps, may or may not be the genuine *bema*, or oratorical tribune ; but none the less it is certain that within a few yards of that spot, if not actually upon it, stood Pericles, or Demosthenes, or Cleon,

uttering words upon which turned events of vital importance to the then civilised world. Now as this approximate certainty is attainable in most places, it follows that those whom it suffices will throughout the country find objects of real interest. But as on the one hand the sight-seer pure and simple is warned off, so on the other the over-minute inquirer is recommended to join the ranks of the archaeologists, and devote not a few weeks, but the remainder of his natural life, to the laudable if futile attempt of identifying the discrepant and discovering the non-existent.

CHAPTER IV.

ATHENS OF TO-DAY.

The modern
Athenian.

A RETURN to modern Athens soon dissipates these associations : the hotels with their European life, the shop windows, the be-trousered inhabitants, stifle the imagination with their incongruity. The amiable and conversational gentleman whom you find beside you at dinner, though generally eloquent on the subject of his glorious "ancestors," proves upon interrogation to know absolutely nothing about them. While roundly professing to understand the "ancient tongue," he usually fails ignominiously when put to the test. Much harmless amusement may be obtained by getting some gentleman or lady to read a little classical poetry, which being by them pronounced solely according to accent, loses all approximation to metre, and becomes a mass of false quantities sufficiently monstrous to bring any offending schoolboy into prompt and sharp contact with the birch. No amount of explanation would make them see the absurdity of this performance. In point of fact, education, though widely diffused, is usually of

the strictly "modern" or "commerical" type, and no race can be more absolutely averse from what they would consider the folly of acquiring unprofitable learning. Eminently shrewd and practical, the modern Greek scorns all sentiment except patriotism. It is true that the desire to serve his country sometimes stops short when it becomes a question of risking life and property in her behalf; but in a disinterested eagerness to guide her destinies and pocket her salaries, there is an absolute unanimity. A strange dislike of manual labour, amounting almost to a mania, combined with the restless mental activity that characterises the entire nation, is at the root of nearly all that is evil in the Hellenic kingdom.

Politics engross the existence of the modern Athenian Greek politics much as they did those of the ancient, but without any longer leaving him some superfluous energy to expend upon art or literature. The manners and customs of honourable members for provincial constituencies may be studied with much profit in the large hotels, where they generally spend the session with their families; and even a superficial observer discovers that the profession of politics is not adopted by a very high class of persons. Some men there are, like M. Tricoupis, who, born in the best society of their own country, and brought up among the best of other countries, are nevertheless willing to devote their life to the public service; and innocent natives relate with astonishment how that gentleman, when he happens to be prime minister, does not allow the free and inde-

pendent electors to be driven out to vote for him at the point of the bayonet. But most persons of high culture and private means, like the Phanariots, or ancient nobility, prefer a dignified seclusion, or else devote their energies to the acquisition of wealth, generally in foreign lands. Political morality seems ever to have been divorced from democracies, except in countries like our own, where good traditions have been so deeply rooted as to survive for a time the rise of democratic institutions. Judging from the example of a great and civilised empire like the United States, we can hardly wonder if a little semi-barbarous country be given over to corruption in public life, if many deputies are of low origin and habits, and if the best men often decline to contaminate themselves with politics.

The Boule.

The following facts as to the Βουλὴ or Chamber may be thought worth recording. It consists of 204¹ members (a number equivalent to 4000 or 5000 in the United Kingdom), all receiving payment for their services. These gentlemen are divided into two parties, headed respectively by M. Tricoupis and M. Coumoundouros, between whose policies it is *naïvely* confessed that there is no difference of principle; so each member attaches himself to that side from which he has most to expect. But there are always some waverers declining unqualified allegiance to either leader, and at any moment open to conviction. These honourable members form

¹ These figures do not include the deputies from the newly acquired provinces: the constitutional arrangements for these districts are still under discussion.

a third party, under a chief of their own, and voting compactly, can at any moment insure the overthrow of a ministry. Consequently, during the nineteen years that have elapsed since the drawing up of the present constitution, there have taken place more than fifty changes of ministry!

Of course we came in for a crisis, and its progress was interesting if not edifying. There seemed no particular occasion for it, except a general idea that the Coumoundourists had been in long enough. For some days the Βουλή or Chamber was the scene of intense excitement. From the seclusion of the foreign minister's box could be obtained a characteristic view of this rather handsome apartment. The benches round the two tall pillars that support the roof were black with deputies, except where here and there the white petticoat of some fine old country member added variety to the *parterre*. The galleries round three sides were crammed with an unsavoury rabble, who took the deepest interest in the proceedings. The faces of all were visible, except that of the orator; but as his excited words must have been almost unintelligible to our unpractised ear, it did not much signify. Yet in spite of the gravity of the situation, the House, which meets after luncheon, never once adjourned later than 6.30, the hour whereat the claims of dinner begin to make themselves felt.

The vote of confidence ended in the defeat of the Coumoundourists by a majority of one, which M. Tricoupis cleverly increased by a threat of dissolution in the event of not being

substantially supported on the next occasion. This manœuvre settled the scruples of many waverers, and the incoming Government retained office till October 22d—a rather unusually long period of seven months.

Conversation with Greeks would in any case have turned on politics; but these events, and the simultaneous approach of our own general election, seemed to drive all other thoughts from their heads. The enormities of Lord Beaconsfield, and the hard-heartedness of Europe generally; the virtues of Mr Gladstone, and the unspeakableness of the Turk,—formed the main themes of their eloquence. Always anxious to make proselytes to Philhellenic views, they are peculiarly prone to “try it on” with Englishmen, whose influence on the affairs of Europe they, as a commercial people, are perhaps disposed to overrate. Thus they make friends very readily up to a certain point; but an intimate acquaintance with natures so secretive and so different from our own, is in most cases hardly possible. Moreover, hospitality is not one of their weaknesses when it takes any more expensive form than coffee and cigarettes, a refection which all Hellenes of any degree are ready at all hours to press upon strangers. But Englishmen as a race hardly grow familiar over afternoon calls and *Rabat Lakhoun*, and their intercourse with natives is apt to stop short of friendship.

Hospitality.

In consequence of this national peculiarity, social festivities are almost confined to the palace and foreign ministries. Nevertheless there are a few private houses that entertain

freely; and their efforts, from being so sparingly imitated, deserve the higher appreciation. By the middle of March *levées* and Court gaieties were over, in anticipation of the near approach of Lent; but there was just time to see a single ball on the last night of carnival. The hospitable lady of the house had given her friends leave to bring any one they chose, and as masks might be worn, no names were announced. There was a considerable crowd, for the most part masked, anxious to display their wit, particularly upon strangers, which generally took the form of addressing us in broken English, any further point being either non-existent or so fine as to baffle detection. The proceedings were amusing enough; dancing took place in a kind of inner hall on a good floor, to the strains of an enthusiastic but slightly erratic band. Square dances were the really important thing, and the British habit of vaguely walking through a quadrille rather scandalised the company. Round dances were interminably long, but then everybody took a turn with everybody else's partner in the most promiscuous manner. On one side was a handsome drawing-room; on the other a dining-room and two smaller apartments—the latter dedicated to the goddess Nicotine, whose worship some of the ladies appeared to consider by no means objectionable. One little trait amused us: we were informed that various people had come uninvited under cover of their masks, who, not wishing to make the hostess's acquaintance or to be known to have been present, would be certain to vanish as soon as the moment came for

Carnival
festivities.

uncovering their faces. Consequently, at about one o'clock there took place a regular stampede of these delicate-minded persons, leaving the hostess's set in possession of the field.

Female
beauty.

But, O shade of Byron, what disappointment to gaze upon the maids of Athens unmasked! How many a tender illusion, nursed carefully for the last two hours, was dispelled all in a moment! The prevailing but erroneous belief in the beauty of Greek women must be founded on his lordship's little poem,¹ and dates from Turkish times, when the fair sex lived in an almost oriental seclusion, and were assumed by a false analogy to resemble the men, among whom a high standard of good looks undoubtedly prevails. This discovery, though painful, ceases, after a little reflection, to be startling. In the first place, the male, and not the female ideal, was anciently the type of Greek beauty. The Apollo Belvedere, the Faun or the Hermes of Olympia, are surely nearer to perfection than any extant statues of goddesses, always perhaps excepting the Aphrodite of Melos. Any one acquainted with Greek literature, more especially with the writings of the philosophers, will readily assent to this position. Moreover, a strong intermixture of Slavonic and other elements has rendered this disproportion between the sexes greater; and it is a remarkable fact that in islands like Melos, or in inaccessible spots on the mainland—wherever, in short, a purer strain of Hellenic blood has been maintained—there is invariably an advance in the comeliness of the women. Finally, centuries

¹ Ζώνη μου σ' αὖς ἀγαπῶ.

of hopeless degradation must have tended to produce hereditary ugliness in the weaker sex. Putting aside the European life of the capital, which only commenced fifty years ago, and affects an inappreciably small proportion of the population, we may boldly assert that women have scarcely risen above the level of beasts of burden. In all the country districts the men lounge away the livelong day, while their wives hew wood, draw water, and till the fields. Thus a stunted figure, a toil-worn expression, and a tanned complexion, are the general characteristics of Greek womanhood; and it would take centuries, even if the country had been civilised and the relations of the sexes readjusted on European principles, before an average standard of female good looks could be attained.

But to return to our ball, which in spite of these considerations grew very merry, and was graced by a few lovely faces. At supper the hostess's health was drunk with three times three; and then followed the Pyrrhic dance, which has rather a depressing effect upon the spirits of a stranger. A cotillon Cotillon. ensued, in which it was perhaps somewhat rash to embark, as there was thenceforth no opportunity for retiring: indeed the hospitable doors were locked in order to prevent the possibility of so ungallant a proceeding. At length, at 5.30 the entertainment terminated; but the fun was by no means all over, for then began an exciting but futile search for our hats, whose English make had excited the admiration of some native gentlemen. There was therefore nothing for it but to sally forth in the head-gear by them discarded, of which it

may suffice to say, that nothing short of sheer necessity could have induced us to touch it even through the medium of a very long pole. The next delight was the discovery that our Jehu, being, like all his countrymen, an independent-minded man, and misliking the cold, had disregarded his engagement to fetch us away; so that there was no alternative but to slide back in our pumps over the frozen snow. This cheerful mode of progress under the rising morn was less rigidly straight than it might have been, owing both to the unsteady nature of ice as a substance to walk upon, and to the frequent attacks of ferocious dogs, who, springing up unexpectedly upon low garden-walls, make violent attempts to seize the ears of passers-by. Our involuntary deviations from the direct course were no doubt erroneously, though not unnaturally, attributed to vinous excess.

Climate.

The mention of snow in the middle of March may possibly occasion some little surprise; but there it was, three good inches hard frozen, in the streets of Athens. A passage in 'Childe Harold'¹ informs us that such a thing *never* happens; but Mr W. S. Gilbert having taught us the latitude necessary for interpreting that adverb, we accepted the oft-repeated assurances of the natives to mean that snow "hardly ever" lies there, and blessed our misfortune in coming in for one of the extremely rare exceptions.

In point of fact, the foulness of no climate can surpass the horrors sometimes provided by that of Athens. Snow does not

¹ Canto ii. stanza 85.

remain for long, but it will return again and again. After a still day of cloudless beauty and warmth, the traveller awakes to find a white world; the flakes continue falling all that day; on the next the streets are impassable in the thaw; on the third it rains from morning to night; the fourth is clear and bright, but with a north wind, in contrast to which any English March breezes are as balmy zephyrs—a wind that drives whole dust-bins into the eyes round every corner, that cuts into the very marrow, and against which it is often impossible to keep one's feet. For the next month it was the same story in all parts of Greece—an occasional glorious day, followed by several of rain, wind, and hail, proving the fatal mistake of attempting to travel too early in that country. Knowledge only comes with experience, and the one thing need-
ful in contemplating such a tour is to abandon the fiction that the Hellenic kingdom has any pretensions to be called civilised. Let the pilgrim wait for warm weather, say in May or June, and make the same preparations as though he were about to go through Arabia or Central Africa. Particularly let him sleep under canvas: he will be free from the extortionate demands, the insufferable intrusions, and the insect companions of the rural householder. He will also be able to stop where and when he pleases. Under the ordinary system he must reach his destination or pass the night *al fresco*; but since it is a favourite pleasantry on the part of the inhabitants to understate distances and misdirect him as to his route, it follows that he may not arrive till hours later than he in-

Best season
for travelling.

tended: and then, having no time to look about him, must settle down in the first draughty hovel that may offer itself.

Life in
Athens.

Modern Athens is too well known outwardly to need much description. Steamers of various lines touch at the Piræus: Anglo-Indians contrive a short visit either going out or coming home, and the ubiquitous Mr Cook allows his little flock a day or two to get through the antiquities. It is just this familiarity with the capital that gives rise to the ordinary misconceptions concerning Greece. In Athens, Patras, and Syra, there are life and progress: travellers see no more than these towns, and return impressed with the conviction that the Hellenic kingdom is advancing with rapid strides. Let them go a few miles up country before pronouncing an opinion.

At any rate, Athenian life is comfortable enough, even if it lack the element of wild excitement. Curious as are the hours and *cuisine* of private houses, the most fastidious European can put up with the hotels. He will find every official only too ready to show him anything: indeed this obliging class of persons seem to imagine that a foreigner's sole object in going so far is to study the institutions of to-day; and an antiquarian's hardly concealed indifference is to them totally unintelligible. For a time this communicativeness is amusing rather than otherwise, and existence is very tolerable; then there is developed a feeling of monotony, due to a lack of special occupation rather than to any want of agreeable companionship. A Court, a *corps diplomatique*, a legislative

body, and naval officers of all nations, form a society resembling on a small scale that of a Western capital. But the ordinary distractions of Western life are wanting. Native art would seem to be non-existent; native music is almost confined to the military bands; native literature does not rise above the level of journalism; native drama there is none, except a few open-air performances in the summer. No wonder that King George likes to visit his great relations in other countries, when all his home amusements depend entirely upon himself. There is one permanent theatre, to which he occasionally imports foreign troupes. One of these "European companies" had been advertised for some days previous to our arrival, and every one was looking forward to the opera; but when the evening in question came, there were no performers, and, what was more, they never arrived at all: whether frightened by the gales, or engulfed in the blue waters of the Mediterranean, or permanently incapacitated through sea-sickness, must remain to all time a mystery. His Majesty's chief solace appears to consist in his private skating-rink, and in shooting on the one or two islands which are his own property.

If Royalty be thus threatened with boredom, the life of the subject can hardly be expected to be very rollicking. To sit outside the *cafés* in the Square of the Constitution and listen to the strains of the band, or to drive and walk along the dusty Patissia road, are the most ordinary forms of amusement. In summer, expeditions to Piræus and Phalerum, with a view to

a very occasional bathe, are added to this round of delights. Some gentlemen display the soundness of their views as to morality and political economy by advocating the establishment of gaming-tables at the Piræus, with a hope of cutting out Monte Carlo, and bestowing upon their own port a noble pre-eminence as a gathering-point for universal blackguardism.

Gambling
propensities.

The gambling instinct is unfortunately ineradicable from the Greek nature. Even in the smallest towns, groups are to be seen playing the whole day long at "casino" or some other improving pastime. The technical meaning of "Un Grec" sufficiently indicates the reputation of the nation with reference to games of skill,—apparently rather a tender point, seeing that a French gentleman of immense powers of legerdemain utterly refused to show off his card-tricks before his Hellenic friends, for fear of being thought to allude to the national weakness, in which case a challenge must have inevitably ensued. Another instructive example is furnished by an Englishman who, being desirous of learning the language, made arrangements for entering *en pension* into a respectable native family. The staple evening's amusement consisted of penny loto, wherein parents and children all took part; but the stranger was soon requested always to read out the numbers—because, as was subsequently explained, if that duty was intrusted to any member of the family, it was found by experience that that person invariably won.

Active exercise is not more favourably regarded by the upper classes than by the lower: indeed opportunities for its

indulgence cannot but be scanty where there is no country-house life, and where the absence of means of communication confines educated persons to the towns. Some English residents established an asphalt lawn-tennis court on a bit of unoccupied building-ground, but the citizens never took kindly to the game; and on the accession to power of a Russophil ministry it was shut up, on the plea that it was required for military purposes.

The modern buildings require but a few words. The glare Modern buildings. of the white marble is so strong as to take away all pleasure from a close inspection; but from the top of Lycabettus—the Arthur's Seat of Athens—an agreeable view can be obtained. Close under it lies Stadium Street, with the Boule (or Chamber), Post-Office, and British Legation. In the next boulevard is the smart-looking university, the centre of education for more than a thousand students, at once the pride and curse of the country. At the end of these streets is the Palace, with its handsome gardens, generally open to the public, but exceptionally closed against us on a snowy day, on the ground that his Majesty was at that moment employed in shooting woodcock therein. Beyond is another boulevard, with the English and Russian churches, and, in front of the Palace, the Square of the Constitution, with the large hotels, and with Hermes Street running out of it right away to the railway station. Full in the middle of this street stands the funny little church of Capnicaria—a many-domed Byzantine edifice, and, like all the old churches of Athens,

extremely small. At any rate, it is quaint and interesting, and contrasts pleasantly with the modern cathedral, a large pink building, wherein a touch of Roman architecture is incongruously blended with Byzantine.

Museums.

There still remain to be mentioned the Museums, containing much both of beauty and of interest. But that disintegrating tendency which prevented united action among the ancient Hellenes, is strongly rooted in the nature of their successors. It is in consequence of this antipathy to centralisation that every little *deme* insists upon starting its own "museum;" so that works of art are often relegated to some windowless wooden hovel, in spots unvisited by civilised man.

Similarly, there are in Athens several of these institutions, although one moderate-sized building would easily comprise the contents of all. Nor is the visitor annoyed merely by having to move from place to place in studying objects of the same class; for he soon finds that each museum is only open on one or two days in the week, and that between stated hours. The reason was admitted to be, that a single attendant has to look after all six, and consequently only one is accessible at a time.

Three of the "museums" are conducted on a charmingly simple plan. Anything picked up in the neighbourhood is thrown in anyhow, without record of where or when it was found; so that fragments of the same piece of sculpture may be lying in the four corners of the room, without the slightest prospect of ever being reunited. To an ordinary stranger,

necessarily making rather a hurried inspection, this arrangement affords more amusement than instruction. These remarks apply to the Temple of Theseus, which contains a capital set of casts of its own frieze—taken from the original in the British Museum—and a hopeless confusion of unlabelled odds and ends. They are also true of the two establishments on the Acropolis,—one in the *pinacotheca* on the left of the Propylæa, and the other in a wooden shed to the east of the Parthenon. Here, again, nothing is intelligible except the casts of the Elgin marbles presented by our Government. Theseum.

Somewhat better kept are the other three. There is the Varvakion in Athene Street, containing some excellent mirrors, gold bracelets, and pottery. It was founded in accordance with the will of a certain M. Βαρβάκι, one of those wealthy foreign Greeks who have done so much for the capital of their race. The Varvakion.

The National Museum is worth a protracted visit: there are good busts and vases; but most interesting are the reliefs, either tombstones or representations of *θίασσοι* (religious processions). Here also is the celebrated “Macedonian” soldier, now ignominiously laid upon his back. The funeral monuments are remarkable for beauty and simplicity. The motive is generally the same: the dead person is depicted as about to depart on a far journey, and is taking leave of sorrowing friends. The laudatory paragraphs and sesquipedalian epithets of some of our tombstones are here unknown. The following are specimens taken at random: A woman is seated; a figure, National Museum.

apparently that of a younger woman, is stooping to touch her sandal—she is probably preparing her for her long, long voyage: the only inscription is, “Ameinoceleia, daughter of Andromenes.”¹ Again, a comely matron sits taking something from a casket presented to her by a handmaiden; a child at her feet is holding a bird upon her knee: we read, “In this spot earth covers Archestratie, the good and prudent, most deeply lamented by her husband.”² Or a young woman supports a little girl upon her knees, of whom it is said, “Here lies Polyxene, who has left a legacy of sorrow to husband, mother, and father.”³ Still more simple is another slab, on which four figures are represented, three bidding farewell to the fourth: there is no legend, except, “Damasistrate weeps for . . .”⁴ (the dead person’s name being obliterated).

Dr Schliemann’s collection.

But by far the most interesting collection at the present moment is that of Dr Schliemann, which contains, besides other things, the whole of the great excavator’s discoveries at Mycenæ, save the so-called corpse of Agamemnon, which would not bear transportation. English critics had laid such stress upon the rudeness of most of these articles, that we were agreeably surprised at the elaborate workmanship of many of the gold instruments. Some of the signet-rings and

¹ Ἀμεινοκλεία Ἀνδρομέου θυγάτηρ.

² Ἐνθαδε τὴν ἀγαθὴν καὶ σώφρονα γαῖ' ἐκάλυψεν
Τὴν Ἀρχεστρατὴν ἀνδρὶ ποθεινοτάτῃν.

³ Πένθος κουριδίφ τε πόσει καὶ μητρὶ λιπυῖσα
Καὶ πατρὶ τῷ φύσαντι Πολυξένη ἔνθαδε κέϊται.

⁴ Δαμασιστράτῃ γοῶ . . .

cups can hardly belong to a prehistoric age, although we may readily assign to it the ox-headed idols and funeral paraphernalia. The latter consist of masks, enormous crowns, and circular plates sewn on to the robes in which the departed hero was buried. All are of gold beaten thin and much ornamented. A rude representation of a butterfly is the ordinary emblem upon the plates; and a Christian's fancy may be pardoned for tracing, even erroneously, in that symbol a strange foreshadowing of his own great doctrine of resurrection to a better life.

Not less remarkable than his museum is Dr Schliemann himself, who, having married a Greek lady, intends to settle down in Athens, where he is building himself a fine new house, called most appropriately *Troy Hall*. It is a large Italian-looking building, surmounted by statues of gods and heroes; but as it was not yet fit for habitation, we found the famous discoverer in a little house behind it. Always courteous, he insisted upon an interview in spite of extreme pressure of work: it was very annoying to learn that this cause alone was to deprive us of the really great privilege of exploring Athens in his company. But ten hours a-day of literary labour leave little time for recreation, and he was just then employed upon the proof-sheets of his great work, '*The City of Priam*,' which he had chosen to write in English; but as it was being simultaneously translated by other persons into French and German, and proofs were constantly arriving in all three languages, the task of correction was anything but light.

CHAPTER V.

EXCURSIONS FROM ATHENS.

Suniium.

ANY expedition necessitating a night out had better not be attempted without a regular guide and equipment; and as nearly all points of interest lie to the west of Athens, they should if possible be brought within the set tour which the traveller may propose to himself. Cape Colonna or Sunium affords one splendid exception, with its Temple of Athene, ever dear to the ancient Athenian—yearned for in absence, hailed with rapture on the homeward voyage as the first object that spoke of his native land.¹ Two or three days must be devoted to this visit, unless a trip by steamer chance to offer itself; but in any case, the time spent will not be regretted.

There are, however, various excursions to be comfortably accomplished in a single day,—notably those to Marathon,

¹ Soph. Ajax, 1217 :—

γενοίμαν ἴν' ὕλᾱεν ἔπεστι πόντου
 πρόβλημ' ἀλίκλυστον, ἄκραν
 ὑπὸ πλάκα Σουνίου,
 τὰς ἱερὰς ὕπως
 προσείποιμεν Ἀθάνας.

Eleusis, Phyle, and the summits of Hymettus or Pentelicus. One of the latter is on all accounts to be recommended, as giving a true idea of the configuration of Attica. Accordingly, Ascent of
Pentelicus. one fine morning, a party consisting of two Englishmen and a Greek gentleman and lady, might have been observed driving out beneath the crags of Lycabettus, *en route* for Pentelicus. In saying "might have been," we could with perfect truth have added that they certainly were observed, for the Greek possesses that unwearied curiosity about other people's affairs apparently common to all astute but incurably idle races; hence the extraordinary freemasonry by which, just as in Ireland, the population is informed beforehand of the approach of strangers, and seems to know instinctively all about them and their previous movements. But Attica was just then pronounced clear of brigands, so the friendly interest of the natives gave no cause for alarm. At first there is some cultivation and a few villas, habitable enough at the present moment, but liable to an irruption of Klephts in troubled times, such as 1862 and 1863, when peaceable persons were carried off from the Acropolis itself.

For an hour the carriage rolls along the plain, the cultivation of which is distinctly capable of improvement, seeing that it very often consists in letting the soil alone. The sown patches never have any kind of fence, so that the flocks and herds often have a grand time of it among the wheat. Then comes the village of Khalandri,¹ birthplace of Pericles, where

¹ Anciently Cholargos.

the driver insists upon watering his horses and inspiring himself. The tenderness of Greek drivers for their cattle is largely developed, and they can never pass a pot-house without alighting. The dearness and slowness of Greek vehicles come rather as a shock to those who have just left southern Italy, where the cattle, if inferior, are also cheap, and contrive to get through their work with reasonable rapidity. That the Hellenic horses really fare better than their Italian brethren is at least an open question.

Convent of
Mendeli.

Soon afterwards the ascent begins; and the scenery grows more and more lovely, the road winding along richly wooded ravines and murmuring streams—very rare luxuries in “thin-soiled” Attica. The road ends at the convent of Mendeli, standing on a fresh grass-plot beneath the shade of mighty poplars, between a huge scaur on one hand and the first gentle slopes of Pentelicus on the other. The abbot and council have unfortunately gone down to Athens for the day, and no notice of our arrival has been sent; hence the junior brethren and acolytes are by no means too cordial, and, after the manner of orientals, adopt an attitude of *non possumus*. However, they are induced to let us have a room to lunch in, pending the preparation of which we visit the monastery chapel—a rude whitewashed building, covered with the most astounding frescoes, representing unheard-of saints of the Eastern Church undergoing equally unheard-of tortures.

It is now a question of procuring a guide up the mountain; but Theophanes, the stranger’s servant, has a sudden access of

soreness in the feet, which only the offer of many drachmæ is successful in curing. After passing some pine-woods the climb begins, at first up a *salita* paved with the whitest marble. But this relic of Athenian greatness becomes hidden by *débris* as we approach the region of the quarries. Marble everywhere, till the eye is numbed with picking out a path among the glittering lumps.

The first halt is at the famous grotto near the old quarries, a vast chamber beneath an overhanging cliff. Its insidious coolness invites the pilgrim to rest from his labours and slake his thirst with the lime-water filtering through the countless stalactites. At the entrance is a grotesque little chapel, more curious than awe-inspiring. Then away to the top through deepening snow, an utter desolation save for a few dwarf firs and a pair of eagles circling overhead. Below us lies the semicircular plain of Marathon, spread out like a map. There is the spot where the Persian forces landed; there the marsh where their cavalry fell into confusion; there the slopes whence the Athenians charged headlong upon their line. Across the narrow strip of deep-blue water shine the snowy peaks of Eubœa, and far away the strait goes winding up to Chalcis, while over the smooth Ægean the gleaming Cyclades rise point beyond point and fade into the hazy distance. The foreground on this side is wild and uninhabited, in harmony with the precipitous character of the mountain; and the spectator ceases to wonder how brigands could maintain themselves in a territory so small as Attica. On the other

Plain of
Marathon.

side, Parnassus and the Peloponnesian mountains form a noble background to the vast Attic plain, now appearing a dead flat, save where a tiny swell, as of a wavelet on a summer sea, marks the range of Lycabettus.

Monks.

An hour brings us down to find the hospitable old abbot returned—and much annoyed at not having known beforehand of our coming. A vague report also floats up that the father of one of our companions has been appointed Minister of Religion and Public Instruction in the newly formed Government. It turns out subsequently to be untrue, although there was no antecedent improbability that a fine old Greek gentleman, one of the few survivors of the war of independence, speaking none but his native tongue, and wearing none but his native dress, who had sat for Attica ever since there had been a representative assembly, should be selected for a place in the Cabinet. At any rate, this rumour has the effect of increasing, if possible, the kindly demonstrations of our entertainers, who do all in their power to make up for the former backwardness of their subordinates. We find that the largest, and therefore most elderly rooster, has been sacrificed in our absence, and is even now browning on the spit; while bread, cheese, wine, and aromatic mountain-honey are spread out in the guest-chamber. But the prospect of dining in Athens is more agreeable, and we have to make ready for departure—which is only permitted on our consenting to take away with us all these delicacies, including the bird, which, it being Lent, is of no possible use to the brethren. The following day an

attempt upon his carcass was duly made, out of affection for our simple old host, but had to be abandoned as hopeless.

And now the time has come for leaving the city of Athens and entering upon less beaten tracks. Of course some *souvenirs* are hunted for; but to those intending to visit Athens we say emphatically, "Buy nothing." There is not an original industry in the place. A hand-loom institution for destitute women produces some coarse imitations of oriental fabrics, but had better only be patronised on charitable grounds. There are also genuine Turkish stuffs to be purchased in the town, but probably no cheaper than in London. Finally, beware of antiquities: everybody has some to dispose of, but unfortunately every one is well aware of their value, or, if ignorant, only asks the more ridiculous prices. We were much amused at one little incident. Our dragoman one day brought up a tolerably well-preserved cameo, saying that its owner wanted to know whether we should like to purchase it. The price was asked, and 2000 francs named. This produced a roar of laughter, and the ring was sent down-stairs with thanks. Subsequently the dragoman informed us that the owner had possessed this work of art for fifteen years, during which time he had offered it to every Englishman who had passed through Athens, without abating a drachma of his demands. Verily we began to believe the legend of the Sibylline books.

In Hermes Street is a pretentious institution called "The Minerva," devoted to the sale of antiquities and photographs. The former, we were informed by connoisseurs, are mostly

Preparations
for departure.

Sale of
antiques.

genuine, but 50 per cent dearer than in London or Paris. But still greater astonishment resulted from an inspection, by invitation, of the splendid private collection of the Archaeological Professor in the University. After most courteously displaying his treasures, he let fall some remark that caused considerable surprise and led to certain questions, which elicited the fact that every object had its price—about 20 per cent higher than at the Minerva. We sighed and thought of Athens, like Jugurtha of Rome, as “a place where all things are for sale: the city itself, if it could find a purchaser.”

Dragomans.

But now for our final arrangements, a task of much time and trouble. The choice of a dragoman is about the most important and delicate preliminary; but in this case circumstances solved the difficulty. So rare have travellers become, that the entire Hellenic kingdom only boasts four “first-class” guides. Of these one is an apparently unexceptionable Corfiote, but he was engaged by some “dons” who had had the forethought to secure his services several weeks previously. The second was the hero of the Marathon tragedy; and as he had had the misfortune to fall among thieves on two other previous occasions, his claims were soon dismissed. Then came a young man who had only just set up in the business, so that his inexperience was considered a drawback. Finally, there was a Maltee of some standing, to whose tender mercies Fate thus committed us.

Let no traveller imagine that he can dispense with such an encumbrance. Even should he be able to converse fluently

with the natives, he would find existence unbearable had he to make all his bargains directly with them. Indeed he would probably emerge from the interior starved, plundered, and devoured. In the first place, he must take his own bed or sleep upon the floor; in the second, he requires a cook and a portable kitchen; lastly, he must carry many of his own provisions along with him, for native victuals are a sorry support under the fatigues of travel in the interior. Moreover, several beasts of burden are necessary for himself and his luggage, so that the addition of a few extra men and animals scarcely adds to the unwieldiness of his cavalcade.

The dragoman contracts to find food, lodging, and transport for a fixed amount—usually £2 per head per diem. This does not include such extras as *baksheesh* to drivers, guides, or soldiers, carriage-hire where there are roads, or bottled wine. The latter is worthy of mention, because the wine of the country is invariably full of resin, and tastes like pitch; so that most Europeans regard it as the traditional writer of the prize poem on Nebuchadnezzar represents the Babylonish monarch as regarding his provender—namely, with the feeling that

Travelling
necessaries.

“It may be wholesome, but it isn’t good.”

Any attempt to defray current expenses in person, paying the dragoman for his services only, will be invariably found to end in a loss. The best course is to agree to any sum that may be demanded beforehand, and to decline all subsequent bar-

gaining, since money transactions with the natives are enough to bring most persons to an early grave.

Brigandage. The next thing is to settle approximately one's route. This must largely depend upon the condition of brigandage at the moment. Its fluctuations will generally have been communicated to the British Minister, whose advice must in all cases be sought and acted upon. He is certain not to err upon the side of rashness, so that his assent to a proposed journey brings with it a comforting sense of security. Those persons who travelled before the accession of Mr Gladstone's Government, and the resulting disturbances in Eastern Europe, are to be accounted extremely fortunate, since Greece was probably more quiet at that time than it is likely to be for many years, now that 60,000 armed men have been or are about to be disbanded.

In the spring of 1880 a large tract of country was open to travellers. The frontier was of course utterly insecure, so that Thermopylæ was out of the question; and the recent capture of Colonel Synge, an officer of the Turkish *gendarmérie*, carried off from his own house by the notorious Niko, formed an effective commentary on official assurances as to this point. Moreover, in the previous November the Hellenic Government had notified formally to Lord Salisbury that there were brigand chiefs in Acarnania and Ætolia who might make arrangements for the capture of English sportsmen and tourists, in which event King George's Government declined to be answerable for any ransom that they might

exact. However, unless shooting be the object in view, it is no serious deprivation to have to leave these districts unvisited.

The British Minister being informed of the route selected, will procure a circular letter addressed to all nomarchs, eparchs, and demarchs, commanding them to "offer due hospitality and assistance to A. B. and C. D., British subjects," &c., &c. The aforesaid A. B. and C. D. are, however, advised to place more reliance on their own dragoman, and on the persuasive power of his drachmæ, than on all the local officials of the kingdom put together.

The Government next insists upon telegraphing to each place which it is proposed to visit, acquainting the municipal authorities with the fact—a somewhat supererogatory proceeding, and extremely useful to the Klephts if a stray gang or two should chance to have escaped the watchful eye of the gendarmerie. However, all these preliminaries must be taken in good part, as proofs of the extreme care and courtesy of the Government, who, being well aware that the interior is not a bed of roses, and that its dangers are considerable, are really anxious to avoid the indelible stigma of another such catastrophe as the Marathon massacre in 1870. The fact that two quiet Englishmen are about to set out on a journey up-country would hardly seem to be one of very great interest; but so rare comparatively is this event, such publicity does it acquire from the authorities, and so insatiable is the curiosity of the population, that the traveller, much to his disgust, finds

himself a cause of general excitement. The fact that two other parties happened to be starting almost simultaneously, tended in our case greatly to increase this feeling.

It being advisable to use carriages wherever practicable, we determined to begin our ramble with a driving excursion into Eubœa, so as to break gently the transition from the comforts of Athens to the hardships of the interior. In this we were to be accompanied by our Greek friends, to whom it seemed advisable to show something of their own country; for, strange as it may appear, cultivated Hellenes possessing an intimate acquaintance with France, Italy, and England, generally know nothing of Greece, there being little inducement, even if there were greater facilities, to go beyond the suburbs of the principal towns.

The first thing was to secure a good roomy carriage: but in Greece no one knows anything; consequently, even at the establishment whence the mails start, complete ignorance is professed of time or distance. All estimate as to cost is refused; and finally, when pressed, the foreman vows that he does not even know how often in the week the post starts for or comes in from Chalcis. The purpose of this manœuvre is to gain time for arranging his proposed extortion, for in the afternoon he calls at the hotel with exorbitant proposals. These are at first declined, and various drivers are spoken to in the streets: but they have all discovered the purpose for which they are wanted; and so perfect is the freemasonry of

the fraternity, that every man demands the same identical sum as our first friend.

But there is still one sacred duty to be performed: a moonlight farewell of the Acropolis must be taken. So at a late hour a jovial international party passes up the winding ascent, and rouses from his first sleep the ancient guardian of the gate. But the threshold once passed, frivolity dies away before the solemn weirdness of the hour and place. A full Southern moon brings out into the sharpest relief every angle of the entablatures, every fluting of the columns; while the impenetrable blackness of the shadows imparts to the Parthenon a sense of indefinite vastness. Not a sound breaks the stillness of the night: it is a moment to impress the most light-minded with a feeling of vague awe, to overwhelm the thoughtful with a flood of mighty memories. But all things have an end, and we pass out in silence. We may never again stand upon that glorious height, but its form will remain engraven on the soul with a vividness which no other scene can approach.

CHAPTER VI.

DRIVING TOUR: THEBES AND CHALCIS.

Street of
Tombs.

SLEEP banishes these reflections, and still more the immediate necessity for getting off in the morning. Our excellent friends are, up to the last moment, in some doubt about going; but a fine morning and the sight of a carriage with four horses determines them to make the effort. So at about ten we trot away, and pull up near the Church of Holy Trinity in order to examine the tombs. These ran for some distance beside the Sacred Way, so called because along it passed the Theoria or Procession to celebrate the mysteries at Eleusis. Some of the best reliefs have been covered with wirework—a very necessary precaution in Greece for antiquities not otherwise protected. One of the best monuments represents a horseman overthrowing a hoplite, or heavy-armed foot-soldier; and another is very peculiar, depicting four persons seated at the festal board taking leave of a fifth, who has one foot on the land and another in a boat, evidently that of the “grim ferryman” Charon—no doubt a memorial of some

one cut suddenly off in the full tide of youth and pleasure. There are also plain stones with the names of whole families inscribed upon them, the same name usually recurring in alternate generations, except where a break indicates the decease of an eldest son without male issue.

Thence away through the great olive-grove, leaving on our right the Colonus or hillock where blind old Œdipus¹ sat him

¹ Soph. Œd. Col., 16 and 668. The latter reference is to the celebrated chorus descriptive of the beauties of the Colonus—that chorus which its author is said to have quoted in old age as convincing proof of his sanity. The place is now sadly changed. The following is a rough rendering of the first strophe:—

“To the bravest spot in our land, the home
Of goodliest steeds, thou, stranger, art come :
 To Colonus the white,
 Where the sweet bird of night
Doth warble most oft 'neath her leafy dome,—
 She that loveth to cower
 In the god's pathless bower
'Mid the ivy dark with its numberless fruit,
Where the sun's rays scorch not and storms are mute,
Ever haunted by Bacchus, of revellers first,
With the maidens divine who his infancy nursed.
And here, where dews of heaven downpour,
 Blooms all day long in clusters fair
Narcissus, with whose flowers of yore
 Great goddesses entwined their hair ;
Here gleams the crocus with its golden rays,
Nor fails Cephissus in the wandering maze
 Of his streams fertilising,
 But their founts ever rising
 With limpid wave
 This country lave,
And run the whole day o'er its swelling plains.
Nor the band of the Muses this spot disdains,
 For they hither repair
 To dance, with the fair
Aphrodite, Queen of the golden reins.”

Daphni.

down before imploring the hospitality and protection of the Athenian people—a “place full of bay-trees, olives, and vines, wherein many nightingales sweetly sang.” Then on to Daphni, the highest point of the pass connecting together the Attic and Thriasian plains. The horses are pronounced thirsty, so we examine a little ruined Byzantine church and a neighbouring monastery with the quaintest of cloisters or chapels. Then down the descent between Mounts Icarus and Corydallus, past the site of the temple of the rustic love goddess Aphrodite Phile, where numerous little niches in the smooth scarped rock attest the assiduity of her worship among the simple maidens of the district; and forward to the seashore, along which our road runs as far as Eleusis.

On the right are the Rheitoi lakes, separated from the sea only by a narrow strip of land; but though their water is salt, they are fed by springs of their own. This puzzled the ancients, who, knowing of no other salt-water current except the Euripus,¹ sagely suggested that they were fed from it. These meres were sacred to Demeter and her daughter Persephone, and the fish contained in them were reserved for the exclusive use of their priests.

We are now in the Eleusinian territory, and enter upon the Thriasian plain, sheltered from the four winds of heaven, but no longer dedicated to the corn goddess, for it lies desolate under the curse of indolence and barbarism. Through

¹ Paus. i. 38, 1.



ELEUSIS, AND THE BAY OF SALAMIS.

the midst flows the Cephissus—not the stream of that name which we crossed two hours ago, but its Eleusinian namesake. Fancy two Ouses or Dees only ten miles apart ! These details are interesting as marking the isolation of each plain or valley of ancient Hellas—a consideration never to be lost sight of in reading and interpreting its history.

After passing some Roman ruins, the relics of Adrian's Eleusis, munificence, we enter the squalid village now occupying the site of the sacred city of Attica. Its past, like its physical aspect, seems capable of but a vague reconstruction. Ancient authors usually refrain from even hinting at the nature of its mysteries ; and great must have been their reputed sanctity, when we find Roman emperors eagerly undergoing the ceremony of initiation, and writers¹ of the empire declaring themselves forbidden in their dreams so much as to describe the interior of the sacred enclosure. The conquest of Eleusis by Erechtheus, and its union with Athens on terms of semi-independence, belong to the epoch of legend. The annual processions along the Sacred Way, with their strange medley of ribaldry and reverence, extend over the whole period of history. Arguing from analogy and fragmentary allusions in Greek authors, we may infer that the doctrines taught were moral truths based on and extracted from the grosser legends of the popular mythology, thus approaching the Christian conception of "religion"—a notion almost wholly wanting in the public cult of the ancients. The powers worshipped were

¹ Paus. i. 38, 6.

Demeter, "Mother Earth," and her daughter Persephone, Queen of the nether world; so that it is doing no violence to probability to assume that the initiated gained moral strength for their life here, with good hope for that beyond the grave.

At the present day a collection of wretched hovels stands over the buried remains of all this greatness. Some sites, such as those of the two Propylæa, have undergone attempts at clearance, and can be traced with an approach to accuracy. The greater Propylæa were said to be an exact imitation of those of the Parthenon, a statement to which there is nothing antagonistic in the forms of the surrounding fragments. Small subterranean chambers have also been discovered; but the position of the great temple of Demeter cannot be determined with precision. It is vaguely discernible from the enormous marble masses that peer up through the soil between every hut and cabin.

In a little *khani* a frugal meal is ordered, consisting of hard-boiled eggs, salt cheese of the consistency of a deal-board, and the resined wine of the country; but we are told, for our consolation, that as it is Lent, we ought to think ourselves lucky in getting even so much as this.

The population of "Lefsina" turns out to be almost purely Albanian, a settlement left behind during one of the Slav immigrations into the Morea; consequently, its language is as a rule wholly unintelligible to our Greek friends. The latter try to make the landlord believe that their companions are two Turkish Beys; but that gentleman, after expectorating, to

express his disgust at the mention of the Moslem, declines to accept the statement, and hazards an opinion that the strangers are "Lords"—*i. e.*, Englishmen. It may here be remarked parenthetically that the Greeks divide the entire human race, neither exhaustively nor scientifically, into Hellenes, Lords, Europeans, and Turks.

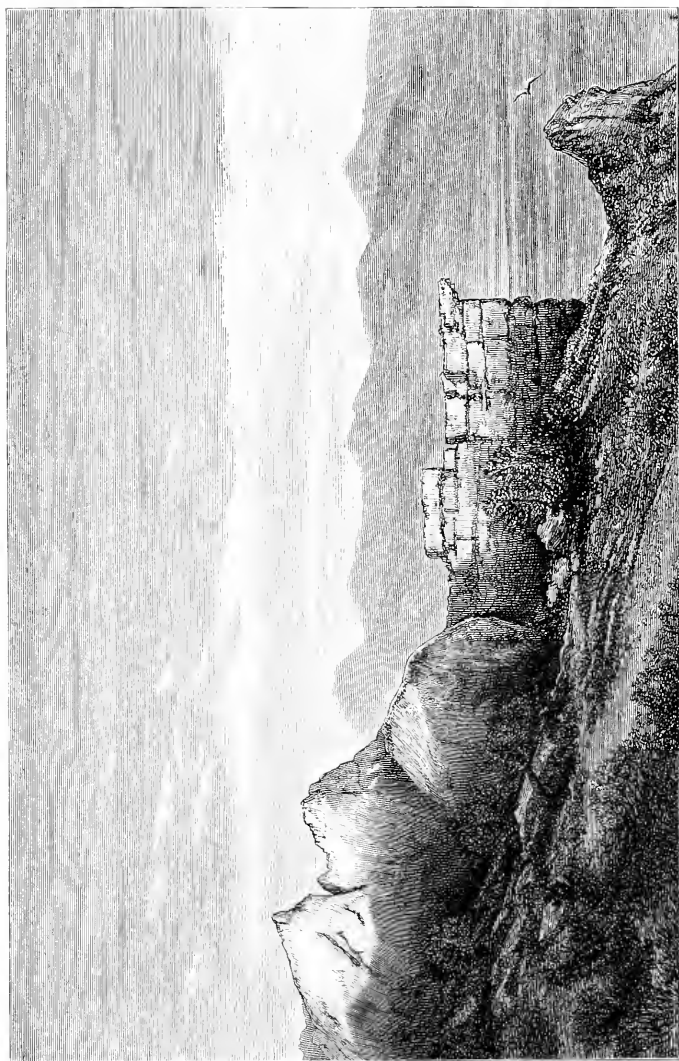
From the Acropolis, between which rock and the shore the village stands, there is a good view of "sea-girt Salamis" and the "rocky brow" on the mainland where Xerxes is said to have sat. The exact spot pointed out by the public is the hollow between two tall peaks some mile or more away. Gigantic indeed must have been the monarch's proportions if they in any degree fitted this huge arm-chair of nature's upholstering, and well would he have deserved his title of "Great King."

Less than half an hour brings us to the village of Mandra, where, in spite of their long rest, the horses again develop a thirst. The only fact of interest elicited by our halt is, that this considerable population possesses neither stream nor well of its own, but fetches all its water from Eleusis. After this point the road lies between tall and densely wooded hills, and curls up and down by bold zigzags, affording from its higher points farewell glimpses of Hymettus and Pentelicus. Drought again seizes our steeds at Mazi, near the ancient CEnoe; and having stretched our legs upon a plain carpeted with anemones of the most gorgeous colour, we proceed thence to the Khani of Kasa. In front rises the wall of Cithaeron, and this spot is the key of the pass. Soldiers are therefore stationed

Eleuthere.

here to keep an eye upon the movements of the hardy "mountaineers;" just as in former times the garrison of Eleuthere held the pass equally against the Klephts and the organised forces of Beotia. The modern buildings stand at the foot of the old acropolis, whose fortifications are at first hardly discernible, so well do they harmonise with the rock out of which they were hewn. A climb to the top at once reveals the entire *enceinte*. The northern wall is almost entire, its beautifully fitted stones presenting a surface as smooth and clean-cut as though it had been erected yesterday. Along this side are five towers in a state of good preservation, and clear remains of three others, admirably illustrating Greek military architecture. In each case the line of the wall turns outwards at right angles, resumes its original direction, and then turns inwards, so that three sides of a square jut out, and assailants are exposed to a flanking fire at any point which they may select for attack. The excellence and practical indestructibility of Hellenic buildings are well illustrated by the present state of this old border fortress, which appears scarcely to have altered since Pausanias visited it. He speaks of the alliance of Eleuthere with Athens as the result not of conquest, but of a desire on the part of the Eleutherians for the Athenian citizenship, and of their enmity towards the Thebans, and then describes the remains as follows: "Part of the city wall was still standing, and there were some ruins of houses."¹

¹ Paus. i. 38, 9.



ELEUTHERE.

Towards sunset we depart up the pass, winding between precipices at almost incredible gradients, with endless effort on the part of the four steeds. The snow lies deep in places, and the stillness is complete, except for the brawling of the infant Cephissus leaping down from its source high up the mountain-side. No wonder that this region became the scene of so many legendary events—such as the exposure and bringing up of Œdipus, or the abandonment of Zethus and Amphion, the twin children of Antiope, with their equally marvellous preservation from death.

When the summit is reached there is just light enough to distinguish the wide Boeotian plain below, with its distant background of towering mountains—a land cut off by nature's strongest barriers from that just left behind, and presenting differences in climate, population, and physical conformation, so strongly emphasised by the writers of antiquity. An even steeper spiral descent leads down from the summit, and twilight has vanished with Southern abruptness, when slowly above the highest peak of Cithæron rises the full orb of the moon, whose rays, flashed back from the surrounding snows, again reveal the panorama beneath.

Cold and fatigue make the sight of Thebes very grateful as Thebes. the carriage drives up the quaint main street, with its double rows of wooden shops, each and all seemingly stocked with the red "Russia" leather slippers, the manufacture of which constitutes almost the only native industry of Greece. Before the horses have fairly pulled up at the door of the chief

apothecary of the town, the road is blocked by a mob of aborigines crowding about the vehicle, and thrusting in their heads round the corner of the hood behind. The first experiences of Greek intrusiveness are very trying to the educated mind; but by degrees the struggle for privacy is given up in despair, and the miserable traveller learns to dispense with solitude, except when the claims of decency are absolutely imperative.

Homeric
hospitality.

Our host, apprised beforehand of our arrival, receives us with the utmost cordiality, but most wisely has as yet made no preparations for dinner, journeys in his country not admitting of any accurate calculation as to their duration. The living-rooms are above the shop, and are reached by an outer staircase in the back-yard, and consist of a drawing-room, dining-room, and two or three bedrooms. Our entertainment generally was Homeric, being hearty, bountiful, and simple, and many details reminded us of the réceptions of chance guests as described in the 'Odyssey.' One difference was at once apparent: in the heroic ages the stranger was usually conducted to the bath as a preliminary to the banquet; but here, while the feast was preparing, no idea of water seemed to enter any one's head, until the guests were reluctantly obliged to give a hint themselves, and the family basin was produced. Then followed a grateful repast of soup, lamb, chicken, and rice, with the best home-made wine, the natural good qualities of which were utterly marred by a strong taint of the inevitable resin.



THEBES, WITH MOUNT PARNASSUS.

The host and hostess can only speak their own language, but their daughter, who has been to school, talks French, and plays some familiar valse on her piano—an instrument which, in such a place, she is not unnaturally proud of possessing. At last we separate for the night, our married friends occupying the host's bedroom, the family very good-naturedly crowding into the other, and we having a shake-down on two ottomans in the dining-room, skilfully prepared by the hand-maidens of the establishment.

The washing difficulty recurs in the morning—since, even after directing an abigail's wondering attention to our india-rubber baths, we can only prevail upon her to bring up water by about a pint at a time. The Greek day is always opened by a cup of coffee and a sweetmeat—the breakfast-hour depending upon the pleasure of the guest, since it would be uncourteous on the host's part to suggest any particular time to him; but ignorance of this custom may, as in the present case, cause considerable inconvenience—to those at least who are not accustomed to pass the first four hours of the day fasting.

Impediments
to cleanliness.

Thebes offers no temptation for unnecessary delay. An ugly, miserable, modern town of some 3000 inhabitants represents the city of Pindar and Epaminondas. When Alexander rased it to the ground, sparing only the house of the great poet, its death-knell had sounded, and it rose again under Cassander only as the ghost of its former self. Pausanias has little to say of the place, beyond alluding to some

of the more famous of its legends, and pointing out their traditional sites. To-day there is scarcely a building that is not absolutely modern : some foundations of Hellenic walls, a Roman aqueduct from which drips the sparkling mountain-water, and a picturesque Venetian tower at the northern end of the town, comprise all that savours of an older date.

But yet there is a real interest in treading the ground once covered by the great seven-gated city of myth and history, and in realising the conditions under which it flourished. Apart from sea or mountains, it was essentially a lowland city, drawing its wealth from the rich well-watered soil around, and maintaining a constant hegemony over the surrounding States, forcibly bound together in the so-called Boeotian league. But Thebes, though lying low, covers ground sufficiently broken to give an acropolis—a condition seemingly essential to the foundation of every Hellenic city. This elevation, the ancient Cadmeia, is occupied by the centre of the modern town. In the hollow to the left flows a stream supposed to be the Dircean fount. Another rising ground to the south is said to be the Ismenian hill, and in the burying-place of the little church on its summit springs forth the famed water of Ismene. The plain is surrounded by grand mountains : on one side the whole length of Cithæron, now known as Elateia, or the Mount of Pines ; on another, Helicon ; beyond it the twin peaks of Parnassus ; while on the north, where the mainland presents somewhat milder natural features, the view is bounded by the snowy ridges of Eubœa.

A departure is effected after breakfast at about 2 P.M., past the twelve fountains of Ismene, now converted, like all the poetic waters of Greece, to the purposes of an ordinary laundry. The road lies over low ground, once passing fertile, but now guiltless of cultivation; then rises the side of Lykovouni, or Hill of Wolves. From the top another fresh panorama bursts upon the traveller. A steep descent appears to lead down to two great lakes separated by a promontory, whereon stand the minarets and white houses of Chalcis, overhung by the whiter peaks of Eubœa, now gleaming under the western sun.

After a rapid descent and passage beneath the massive gateway of the Venetian fort, the carriage rattles over the drawbridge of the Euripus. The Straits here contract to a width of 30 feet, affording no less wonder to the modern than to the ancient world. Through this narrow neck the sea comes tearing at the rate of ten miles an hour. Wait patiently, and you will observe a diminution in its rapidity, which slackens until there ensues a perfect calm. Then the drawbridge is raised to permit the passage of vessels. After a few minutes the water begins to heave, and then to flow, but in the direction opposite to its previous course; and soon it is rushing along as quickly as before. About fourteen of these changes take place every day.

But before lionisation, comes provision for those vulgar wants that so fatally hamper the intellectual improvement of human nature. Here, as at Thebes, our letter of introduction has

Thebes to
Chalcis.

Chalcis.

An awkward
predicament.

been given wholly in the dark. Some knowledge, indeed, of a man's wealth may be obtained from the tax-gatherer; but his character and mode of life are often wrapped in obscurity, so slender is the communication between capital and provinces. At Thebes we had been most fortunately directed, but equal good-luck did not attend us in Chalcis. A letter and telegram had been sent to a citizen known to be possessed of large means; so we are considerably astonished at having great difficulty in finding the way to his abode, and still more at being eventually guided up a squalid slum to the door of a small cottage. A modest knock fails to reveal the presence of any inmate except a large and ferocious cur, who dashes forth and almost annihilates an unfortunate little terrier belonging to our friends. Still, having no other references in the place, our only course is to face this Cerberus, and after depositing our effects, to await the owner's return. Some special messengers succeed in drawing that gentleman away from his favourite *khani*, and in due course he appears—a magnificently built, elderly person, clad in the national costume. His politeness knows no bounds: “he had notice of our coming, but could not send to put us off, not knowing where to direct a telegram. The house, as we see, consists of two rooms and a back-kitchen; but unfortunately, his wife has locked up her chamber and gone off with the key, so that there is only one apartment available, which he will gladly share with our party.” It being obviously impossible for four gentlemen and a lady to dine and sleep in a single room, and no suggestion being

made of refreshments of any kind, for which nature is loudly crying out, we depart in search of other accommodation.

Our companions are almost speechless with indignation and annoyance at the difficulty into which they have been the innocent cause of our falling, and for the moment are scarcely capable of suggesting a course of action. Our first proceeding is to call at the prettily placed house of a hospitable Englishman, whose scientific tastes lead him to reside in Chalcis in order to watch the phenomena of the Euripus' current, and whose observations are likely to prove of great value to the advancement of navigation. This gentleman is unfortunately absent for the night at his country place, so our next step is to call upon the nomarch with our circular letter. That official is "not at home,"—a misfortune which frequently occurs when a stranger has occasion to appeal to the local authorities. We are rather more fortunate with the demarch; but he offers no very definite suggestion, except the inn, which is said to possess sleeping-apartments. We enter a room full of carousing natives, its floors and tables slippery with spilt oil and wine dregs, strongly scented with garlic and ancient fish. Great as is our wonder that such should be the condition of the chief hotel in a garrison town, it is surpassed by that of our Greek friends, who, like many of the better sort among their compatriots, know little of the barbarism of their country.

While we are in this condition of blank hopelessness, there enters excitedly a good-looking young officer, whom rumour

Unlooked-for
succour.

has informed that a lady of his acquaintance from Athens, with her husband and two Englishmen, is wandering shelterless about the streets of Chalcis. Very soon the aspect of affairs changes: we are at once removed from the filth of the *khani* to a clean little pastry-cook's shop. The general in command of the garrison, who also knows our companions, enters to pay his respects, and declares, in concert with our gallant young deliverer, that if no fitting shelter is obtainable he will resign his quarters in the castle. Luckily, however, there is no occasion for this sacrifice; a hospitable gentleman takes us all into his house, furnishing ample accommodation and every reasonable luxury.

A sunny morning raises Chalcis greatly in our good opinion. The windows look out on to the chief piazza, full of life, and picturesque with dark cypresses and white minarets. To the right is a sort of public garden stretching down to the sea, where the band plays and the citizens congregate. As we sit warming ourselves in the balcony, cheery voices hail us, and are found to proceed from our good-natured helpers of last night, who have called to inquire after our health. Chalcis at all times maintains a large garrison, some 2000 or 3000 men, including a considerable force of artillery. This arm corresponds to our Household Brigade in being socially more highly esteemed than other branches of the service; and as the number of gentlemen is proportionately much smaller in Greece than in England, it appears to include nearly all the

young officers known in Athenian society. Great is the contrast between their smart uniform and appearance and the coarse ill-fitting garb and mien of the average infantry officer.

It is arranged that we shall row to Eretria to see the remains of that once celebrated rival of Chalcis. Preparations, we subsequently learnt, were made on the most elaborate scale. The commandant despatched by land a company of troops to get ready a sumptuous repast against our arrival, and chartered a boat at the hour when the wind is fair. There is, however, engrained in the Hellenic nature a casual happy-go-lucky habit of mind, from which even the most highly educated are not exempt: indeed it would not be for their happiness that they should be otherwise constituted, for in that case their life would be unbearable, owing to the impossibility of inspiring the middle and lower orders with the faintest sense of time or method. Thus, in the present case, no one thought of telling us that in the Euripus the wind sets steadily every morning from the north till noon, then usually drops, and after about an hour blows from the south. Not knowing this, we start at 12.30 in a dead calm, which soon turns to a head-wind. Under such conditions progress is slow; but even so, Eretria might have been reached eventually—only, having received no hint of the commandant's kind arrangements for our reception, and fearing our friends' endurance might not be proof against so long a fast and so long an expedition, we determine to give it up and return on foot, while they run

Futile attempt
to reach
Eretria.

back under a favourable breeze. The boatmen utterly decline to put us ashore, roundly asserting that there is no place for landing, till a display of firmness in the shape of sticks and revolvers quickens their perceptive faculties, and enables us to set foot on *terra firma*.

Triumphal
return.

A single soldier, sent with us for the sake of appearances, insists upon accompanying us in our walk, and will listen to no arguments to the contrary. So we go off at a round pace, under a hot afternoon sun, to the intense discomfiture of this unfortunate son of Mars, whose heavy military greatcoat and rifle, kept religiously at the shoulder, soon make his countenance wellnigh as red and shining as the day-star itself. The track follows the coast for some distance, and then turns inward through really well-cultivated land, — olive-groves agreeably diversified with oaks and figs. Of all parts of Greece, with the exception of the Ionian islands, Eubœa is probably the most enjoyable. Absence of historic interest is amply compensated for by its fertility, the splendour of its mountain scenery, the glorious forests, so uncommon in other districts, and the comparatively peaceful character of its inhabitants. Here alone have any considerable number of French or Englishmen successfully settled upon and worked Hellenic soil—the presence of these proprietors being undoubtedly a cause as well as an effect of the prosperity of the island.

Shortly before reaching Chalcis we pass the sort of minia-

ture Aldershot where our escort's battalion is quartered, and consequently are spared the ordeal of marching into town with military honours, as he leaves us at this point, his comrades indulging in unseemly merriment at his exhausted and woe-begone aspect.

CHAPTER VII.

THROUGH BEOTIA ON PACK-SADDLES.

IN the morning we receive a visit from one of the other parties that had started simultaneously with ourselves: it consists of an Englishman, an Austrian, and a Belgian. The pleasure of meeting European acquaintances under such circumstances is simply indescribable. But the time has come to say farewell to Eubœa; so, with genuine regret, we drive back to Thebes, where our suite is to assemble, and where we are to part company with our friends, who take the carriage back to Athens. After arranging with the dragoman to have the proper horses ready, with a view to starting immediately, it is a most unpleasant surprise to find him lounging all alone in a pot-house, without a sign of visible preparation. It does indeed require time to gauge the subtle workings of the oriental intellect; but in this case the motive is apparent, since if he can induce us not to travel at all on that afternoon, he, being paid a fixed daily sum, will be in pocket to the extent of the horse-hire. He accordingly begins

to point out the advantages of spending the night in Thebes. We reply that the hour being now 1.30, and the distance to Platæa being a short three hours' walk, we most certainly intend to reach that place before nightfall.

Such gentle pressure induces him, after considerable delay, to secure the necessary beasts. There are six in all, members of the equine species, each reminding one of that Piekwickian Greek horses. cab-horse whose feebleness was too great to admit of his ever being removed from the shafts. British pride revolts from such a mode of locomotion, and we start on foot to cross the Beotian plain. Looking round after a while, we observe two of the drivers quietly riding our steeds, who, on being remonstrated with, remark that the beasts are theirs, and if we don't choose to ride them, they will. We, however, take a different view of the rights and obligations attendant on the relation of lessor and lessee, and enforce that view by a bacular demonstration; so that the unhappy jades obtain a brief respite.

The track runs over level ground, cultivated in patches, elsewhere covered with herbage interspersed with asphodel, "grass of Parnassus," and other products of a marshy soil. Indeed it becomes so swampy that we are obliged to mount our steeds. Now this style of riding is both trying and peculiar. The saddle is made of wood, and stands about two feet high; so the rider's grip is a good deal above the back of his animal. There is no bridle; and the stirrups being fastened on by string, are generally of irregular length, and apt to come off unexpectedly. The beasts are unaccus-

tomed to go except in Indian file, each laying its nose affectionately against the tail of the one in front. Should one try to bring one's steed up level with another, the result is merely a change in their relative positions—the hinder moving to the front, and the other dropping to the rear.

The Asopus.

About half-way between Thebes and Plataea the Asopus is crossed, probably at the spot where the Greek and Persian armies lay facing each other, until Pausanias, harassed by the missiles and cavalry of the enemy, was forced to fall back upon a stronger position under the walls of the town itself. At dusk we cross the Oëroe at the scene of the actual battle, and enter the hamlet of Kokla, or "Bones,"—a significant name for a place around which, according to Herodotus, a quarter of a million men fell like sheep in a single day.

Plataea.

Comforts of a farmhouse.

This is the first night of roughing it. We are taken to the dwelling of the chief man of the village, a gentleman who combines the functions of priest and publican. The ground-floor consists of the *khani*, wherein are numerous rustics smoking and drinking. The upper storey, reached by an external staircase, is divided into two compartments. The outer one is hired for our use—the inner being devoted to the making ready of our dinner, and the accommodation for the night of the landlord and his family, our own cook and dragoon, the policeman and tax-collector, as well as a few chance friends of either sex. The preparation of the outer room is conducted under the inspection of a large and interested audience, who also very kindly stop to "see the animals fed." At

length a mild suggestion of retiring for the night effects with some difficulty a clearance. His Reverence has a narrow escape from death; for we are roused at about 2 A.M. by a figure groping for something at our bed-heads in the exact spot where the watches have been deposited. It appears that he wants an extra blanket: he was very near getting a bullet instead. The clergy of the Greek Church are certainly a Greek clergy. simple-minded class. This specimen, for instance, had no idea that he was committing a solecism. In the same way he had caused a mixture of annoyance and amusement by hovering round the table during the whole of dinner-time, pulling about such little objects of personal adornment as we happened to have about us, asking the price of articles of apparel, and wonderingly learning the end and purpose of that useful instrument the cork-screw, which, together with bottled wine, was wholly foreign to the range of his experience. From about 4 A.M. onwards, a continuous stream of persons passes from within to the outer air, and *vice versa*, so that further sleep becomes an impossibility. The room is cleared with some difficulty, and our guide mounts guard at the staircase door; but this is no protection against invasion from inside, and one old lady makes a determined attempt to assist at our ablutions, from which no persuasion short of the forcible and accurate projection of shooting-boots will induce her to desist. It is now requested that the premises may be thrown open so soon as decency will permit, the populace having begun to grow impatient. First there enters an individual, who pauses

and solemnly announces, "I am the village schoolmaster." Despair makes men cunning; so we do but smile feebly. He then says, "Can you speak the ancient tongue?" but obtains no more satisfactory answer. Waiting the completion of our toilet, he follows us to the ruins of the old town, and there delivers his third and last address. "Can you speak the modern tongue?" After this final rebuff the man of letters withdraws, to our great relief, seeing that there is none too much time to spare for an inspection of this most interesting neighbourhood.

Battlefield of
Platea.

One look round suffices to explain the history of Platea,—that noble little State which alone of all the Greeks shared with Athens the danger and glory of Marathon, which clung with touching fidelity to its old ally, and twice underwent utter destruction, owing to the insatiable enmity of its neighbour Thebes. Immediately behind lies the gigantic length of Cithæron, isolating the town from external aid, and rendering almost inevitable, as one would be disposed to imagine, that absorption into the Bœotian league so strenuously and successfully resisted.

The low rocky acropolis, together with two distinct lines of wall, can still be recognised; but they are not older than the rebuilding under Philip and Alexander, and consequently of no great interest. But all around is the scene of that tremendous battle which decided for ever the predominance of Europe over Asia. Close by are the two sources of the Oëroe, enclosing the so-called "island," where the Hellenic



THE BATTLE-FIELD OF PLATEA.

army awaited the attack of the Persians and their allies. Farther on extends the plain, broken by those low rolling hills so nearly disastrous to the Greek arms, by hiding from each other the respective movements of the Spartans and Athenians. Then comes the stream of the Asopus, and just beyond it the site of Mardonius' camp, to which his discomfited forces retired, only to suffer wholesale slaughter under the superior weapons and less cumbrous tactics of their triumphant foes.

Some time afterwards, the cavalcade gets under way. It soon becomes apparent that no orders will be carried out except under personal superintendence, the drivers seeming utterly regardless of the dragoman's authority; so that if the traveller leaves his suite with orders to load up immediately, he will probably find on his return that the horses are still in the shed, with their attendants reclining comfortably beside them.

The track westward passes over the battle-field of Leuctra, Leuctra. a piece of low ground at the foot of a grassy slope, where took place the most important land-engagement ever fought between Greek and Greek, less on account of the size of the contending forces or their respective losses—for about 1000 Lacedæmonians and 47 Thebans were all that fell on the field—than of the political results which the extraordinary genius of the victorious general, Epaminondas, was able to found upon it.

A ride of about three hours from Platea brings us to

Thespieæ.

Eremo - Kastri, or "Deserted Fort," the modern name of Thespieæ, now a considerable village. The constant victim of Theban jealousy, this town survived its persecutor, and in Roman times shared with Tanagra the honour of being the only important city in Bœotia. Famous as the birthplace of Phryne, it was devoted to the worship of the God of Love. To-day there is but small incitement to this cult, to judge from the specimens of modern Thespian ladies that came beneath our observation.

The village is not ungraceful, but contains no ruins. A pretty church, standing amid dwarf hollies on a solitary eminence, is supposed to cover the site of one of the principal temples. Two or three good bas-reliefs are built into its walls.

The Valley of
the Muses.

After luncheon, discussed in presence of an admiring crowd, a start is effected for Livadia. The guide having arranged to take a roundabout road through the Muses' valley, now declares that there is no possibility of accomplishing this *détour*, which has to be reluctantly abandoned. Such are the pleasing uncertainties of this kind of travel. Nevertheless the disappointment is somewhat mitigated by an excellent bird's-eye view of this still lovely region. Helicon is the true mountain of the Muses, Parnassus being but a comparatively modern pretender, and deriving its sanctity, not from Greek but from Latin poetry: and surely the wide smiling dale now open before us is a far fitter abode for the patronesses of art, song, and science, than the frowning precipices and narrow ravines round Delphi.



MOUNT HELICON, FROM THESEI.L.

The sight of the famous valley touches many a chord. Statue and altar have vanished; a few oaks represent the sacred grove; the limits of the sanctuary are unknown; the fountains Hippocrene and Aganippe can only be conjecturally identified. But the feelings are not harrowed by signs of wanton destruction. No building ever adorned the glade: the whole was one great temple, dedicated to the Sacred Nine. The roof that covered their images was some overhanging rock, or spreading tree, or the blue canopy of heaven itself. Scattered about, they stood side by side with statues of the old poets, *Thamyris*, *Arion*, *Linus*, *Orpheus*, *Hesiod*; or of gods more especially devoted to song, *Hermes*, inventor of the lyre, *Dionysus*, and *Apollo*. This was the chosen abode of peace and rustic happiness. Straight from the *Bœotian* plain, the great battle-ground of ancient *Hellas*, we pass to the home of *Hesiod* and the scenes of that farming life which his song depicts. The aspect of the place appears to justify the tradition that here trees grew greener, flowers brighter, and fruits sweeter, than elsewhere, and that no poisonous plant or snake was to be found herein. In solitude it lies now, as then, save that the people of *Thespiæ* no longer assemble there with song and dance to keep the feast of the Muses or Love-god.

And now begins experience of mountain travel. The track grows rocky; and although smooth and easy in comparison with subsequent routes, is sufficiently alarming to the uninitiated. A European requires some time to get over the feel-
Mountain riding.

ing of helplessness produced by riding across slabs of bare rock on a beast of whose sides he has no grasp, and over whose mouth he has no control. Add to this the not yet subdued sense of ignominy inherent in the whole performance, and it will be intelligible that we prefer our own legs to the shaky-looking support of our Theban screws. But the way is broken more than once by water—a most unusual obstacle in Greece,—streams too large to negotiate on foot, that come roaring down from Helicon ; so there is nothing for it but to remount and trust to the firmness and sagacity of the beasts—which, considering their condition and probable age, are marvellous. Meanwhile both guide and cook sit impassive, like pachas on a divan : no descent however precipitous, no stream however deep its banks, will tempt them to leave the “ high-throned ” saddle, as Homer would doubtless have called it, had riding been invented in his day. They have learnt to prefer the risk of an occasional smash to the certainty of tiring themselves by walking. But a penalty is sometimes paid for this persistent assertion of their dignity, as we learnt when our guide confided to us that he had given up carrying a watch after the destruction in rapid succession of two such instruments, caused by collapses of this nature.

The pathway farther on joins the highroad from Thebes to Livadia, and the rate of locomotion slightly improves. On the right is a vast stretch of level ground, sliding imperceptibly into the marshy borders of Lake Copais. Into this great swamp all the waters from the surrounding mountains

find their way, but have no outlet beyond the celebrated "Katavothra." These are very far from sufficient to drain so wide an area, and consequently leave most of the work to evaporation. An enterprising nation might earn vast wealth by assisting nature; but in a country where the most fertile soil is often left untilled, it is out of place to expect such undertakings. So Lake Copais remains much as it always was,—an expanse of water in winter and bog in summer, producing nothing but wild-fowl—often indeed in such numbers, that a friend, speaking of snipe, declared that it soon ceased to be worth while to shoot them.

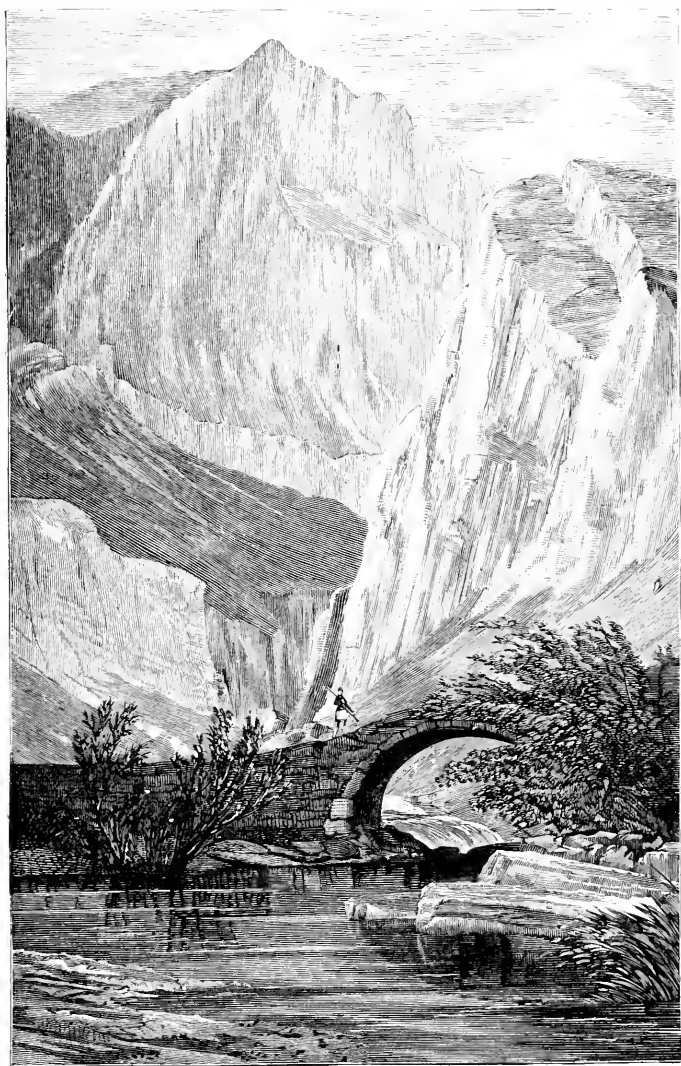
These sporting reminiscences are further stimulated by an appropriate but steady downpour, which continues for three hours. The consequent state of the road combines with the badness of the horses to make it impossible to reach the short cut over the hills before nightfall, and a couple of hours are added to an interminable journey. These unexpected little pleasures ought to be enjoyed philosophically, but time is needful to get the mind into so desirable a state. Meanwhile the drivers keep up their flagging spirits by bursts of song, whose plaintive discords add a touch of melancholy to the situation. An attempt to extract some Klephtic ballads fails utterly, the honest fellows repudiating with scorn any knowledge of what might be held to connect them with the rovers of the hills; so we have to be content with spontaneous ebullitions, which take the form of a Tupper-like Proverbial Philosophy—as for instance, "When Zeus rains from

heaven, 'tis well to have an umbrella for the head ;" and other equally incontrovertible, and, under the circumstances, impressive truths.

At about 9.15 the draggled procession enters Livadia, and halts at the foot of a precipitous alley, only practicable for foot-passengers. While ascending, we hear below the thud of coat and bag and rug, as the attendants cut the luggage from the horses' backs, and suffer it to drop in the rich deep mud of the street. A house, dirty and squalid beyond description, receives us for the night ; and it is well to check all recollection of the next two hours, spent damply in a grimy apartment devoid of furniture, pending the preparation of food. At any rate, it was not a passage-room, and so far an improvement upon last night's accommodation.

Livadia.

A fine morning casts much of these disagreeables into oblivion. There are few places like Livadia. The main street runs up the river-side, and not only with its many shops illustrates Exchange—a very well-understood branch of political economy throughout these regions—but also with its cotton mills affords an example of Production. For there are no less than six wheels turned by the swift stream of the Hereyne, employed in working up the cotton grown on the plain below. On clearing the town a magnificent scene rewards the traveller. The brawling torrent debouches from between sheer walls of limestone, through which it has been winding for nearly a mile, and is at this spot spanned by the highest of the picturesque old bridges that at intervals through



LIVADIA.

the length of the town unite its banks. On a towering height to the left is the old Frankish castle, which, like the dark gorge above, is in strange contrast with the picturesque life below. The hum of perpetual talk rises up from the shops in the main street, and blends with the whizzing of the mill-wheels; while gaily dressed groups of citizens sit ever at the pot-house doors, playing the noble game of "casino," and striving to win a few drachmæ with all that keenness for which encounters between Greek and Greek have been long proverbial.

A stiff climb up the right-hand scaur has the beneficial effect of choking off the little vulgar boys who pertinaciously dog a stranger's steps, and of opening up a grand panorama. Descending from the snow and pines of Helicon, two streams join at the head of the gorge, rushing down upon the little town, and then meander gently through the rich alluvial flats below, irrigating the productive but scanty cotton-fields. On each side of the water the town rises picturesquely up the steep hillsides, separated by a deep ravine from the eminence whereon the castle stands. Above the gorge complete solitude reigns, broken only by the hissing sounds of reptile life, which the noontide heat has awakened after yesterday's rain.

The historic fame of this town is small. The traditional founder, Lebadus, is said to have removed the population of a mountain city, called Midea, down to this less secure site at the foot of the hills. This confidence was justified by the result; and Lebadia flourished quietly, apparently untouched

by the troubles that desolated other cities of Beotia. This immunity is probably due to the *quasi* sacred character imparted to the place by the famous oracle of Trophonius.

Oracle of
Trophonius.

The topographical allusions of Pausanias cannot be satisfactorily harmonised with the present details of the spot; but its general aspect is eminently suited to a home of religious mystery. Legend attributes the name of the river to the maid Hereyne, who, while playing with Persephone in the glen, suffered to escape a goose which she held in her arms. The bird flew into a cave and hid beneath a stone, whence on its discovery the stream gushed forth. Of Trophonius¹ himself even tradition is almost silent. His sacred grove was just above the town, and contained various temples and statues: the oracle itself was, according to Pausanias, "higher up the mountain." The ceremonies to be observed in consulting it were as follows: The inquirer lived for a fixed time in a building sacred to Good Luck and Fortune, and was fed on meat from the sacrifices which he had to provide during that period, purifying himself daily in the waves of the Hereyne. A soothsayer inspected the entrails of each victim, and from them pronounced upon the disposition indicated by Trophonius towards his suppliant. A ram was offered up the night before the visit to the shrine, and favourable symptoms on this occasion were an absolute neces-

¹ Trophonius was reputed son of Erginus, king of Orchomenus; but his worshippers believed Apollo to have been responsible for his existence. He is said to have built the temple of Delphi. His cult survived that of his divine father.

sity. Then at last, after a final bath in the river, the inquirer was taken to the two founts of Oblivion and Memory, and drank of both, that he might forget his former life and remember the truths about to be revealed to him. He was then permitted to gaze upon a sacred statue,¹ visible only to votaries, and, after due prayer, was arrayed in a linen tunic, girt round with bands, and shod with the shoes of the country: he then proceeded to the shrine. The description of the latter is rather hard of interpretation; but apparently the only access was by an opening at some distance from the ground, requiring a ladder to reach it. Provided with honied cakes,² and lying down upon the floor, the inquirer inserted his feet into a hole of the narrow dimensions of two spans in length by one in breadth, and thrust them down till his knees reached the opening. Then suddenly his whole body is drawn through, "as a mighty rapid river whirls a man out of sight." The subsequent revelations are of course hidden from vulgar knowledge. On their conclusion the unfortunate was shot up, feet foremost, through the opening. It is pretty clear, judging by the dimensions of the hole, that stout persons could hardly have gone through the ceremony. The inquirer, while still in a state of high mental excitation (and

¹ Called an "image of Dædalus." To that mythical artist were ascribed various antique statues of a prehistoric epoch, which were regarded with peculiar reverence. They were generally, if not always, of wood. "The image which fell down from Jupiter," Acts xix. 35, was probably of this description.

² These cakes are incidentally mentioned by Aristophanes writing more than five hundred years earlier, as used in consulting Trophonius.—Nubes, 508.

certainly the manner of his exit was calculated to produce a determination of blood to the head), was placed upon the seat of Memory, hard by the shrine: there he was asked all he had seen and heard below, the priests writing down the account he gave. Afterwards he was removed back to the house of Fortune and Good Luck, and tended carefully until the recovery of his senses.

Such is the somewhat grotesque account of Pausanias,¹ founded upon personal experience. The consulting of the oracle appears to have involved an initiation into some species of mysteries, so that wholesome teaching resulted from the visit, notwithstanding priestly avarice and imposture. It is a hopeless task to identify the cave of Trophonius or the seat of Memory. A small natural recess, artificially enlarged, is pointed out as the house of Good Luck; in that case the votary's accommodation must have been rather confined. The founts of Oblivion and Memory are also shown on the left and right of the river respectively. Attempts to reconcile ancient writers' statements with existing phenomena are seldom satisfactory. At Livadia the general conditions can well afford to dispense with minute attention to details.

The next move is to Charonea, reached by a climb over high ground. In the very centre of this bleak table-land a hailstorm comes on, the heat of an English summer having changed suddenly to bitter cold. Shelter there is none; so the whole cavalcade turns its back upon the attack, and sits

¹ Paus. ix. 39, 5.

placidly through the shower, in spite of its stones, which, big as marbles, make themselves felt most uncomfortably.

After this little incident we descend into what may be described as the western estuary of the Bæotian plain. Here was fought the great battle of Chæronea, which, by establish- Chæronea.
ing Macedonian ascendancy in Greece, was destined to shake the whole civilised world. Close by the track are the frag-
ments of the great stone lion erected to the memory of the The lion.
Thebans who fell on that fatal day. Intact it remained until the present century, when, during the war of independence, a brigand chief, called Odysseus, blew it up to see what was inside it.

Chæronea is now a small hamlet at the foot of the acropolis : in the hillside is cut the theatre, remarkable for describing an unusually small segment, probably not more than one quarter of a circle. There is an arch or two of an aqueduct beyond the village, and hard by excavations were going on : nothing had as yet been brought to light except one or two basements and sarcophagi. This spot is to be recommended for a last resting-place before climbing into the Alpine regions beyond ; for though small, it boasts a large clean room wherein to encamp with something like comfort. It was used by the Archæological Society of Greece, and long harboured Dr Schliemann ; moreover, it possesses the inestimable advantage of belonging to a bachelor, who, although personally to be avoided, at least keeps his establishment free from strong-lunged children and inquisitive females.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PHOCIAN ALPS.

ALL efforts to secure a start at daybreak prove unavailing. Our Thebans (a word most appropriately pronounced "Thevans" by the natives) act upon the sound principle of doing nothing till they are obliged; so, although told to be round at 7 for the baggage, they fail to appear, and are long afterwards discovered lying in profound meditation in an out-house. Meanwhile many-tongued Rumour announces that a party of "six lords and twenty-five soldiers" are expected here to-night, and that the advanced-guard is already in occupation of the place. We conclude that these are our three friends, English, Austrian, and Belgian, whom we last saw at Chaleis, multiplied by fame, and all set down as our compatriots. The "advanced-guard" hereupon turns out and corroborates our conjecture. It consists of one man, who thinks he will accompany us to Arakhova. He is an agreeable youth, named Leonidas—a good specimen of the Greek soldier. His language is far more intelligible than that of most persons in

A modern
hoplite.

his rank of life, having, together with his manners, undoubtedly acquired a polish during his military career. Like all his compatriots, he takes a peculiar interest in our attire, but more especially in our weapons. "Will you show me your revolvers? here's mine," he observes, and at once puts into our hand his "revolver"—a single-barrelled muzzle-loading pistol, with a bore of perhaps an inch in diameter. We accordingly tell him a few rather startling fictions as to the range and accuracy of our own little "shooting-irons," all of which he accepts without question. Presently a vulture comes sailing over and alights on a rock about 200 yards away. We suggest giving him a shot with Leonidas's rifle; but so unwarranted an expenditure of Government ammunition would entail serious consequences upon that man of war, who, however, expresses his willingness to employ for that noble purpose the "revolver," it being his own private property. He at once proceeds to walk towards the bird, which, after he has gone about twenty yards, flaps majestically away. Leonidas returns in no wise disconcerted at this unexpected result.

On the right of the track rises the huge acropolis of Daulis; and as opinions are divided upon the advisability Daulis. of visiting it, we determine to separate, the soldier undertaking to guide one of us round by that village. In spite of a regular waterspout and a very stiff climb, the place was well worth the *détour*. The hill is isolated, and almost sheer on every side, while the flat summit is large enough

to have sheltered the entire population of the ancient town, together with their flocks and herds. Daulis, scarcely known in history, but famous in legend for the crime and tragic punishment of Tereus its king, affords another instance of those little-known cities on whose sites survive traces of strength and greatness utterly wanting in Thebes, Argos, or other famous localities.

On descending, it is found that Leonidas has had the good sense to put the horse under cover. He leads the way to the priest's house, an old gentleman as genial and ignorant as the rest of his class. His offers of hospitality are unbounded, and he asks news of the outer world with a childlike curiosity and simplicity. He has not seen an Englishman for two years, and is of course complimentary about our nation. Drenched to the skin, and separated by miles from headquarters, we have no alternative but to push on, after swallowing a cup of hot coffee. At the last house in the village Leonidas stops and magnanimously insists upon "standing" a glass of *raki*.

We then ascend the high ground right under Parnassus. The "road" consists of bare rock, now running with a liquid compared to which pea-soup might seem transparent. Progress is slow—even the most highly trained beast being incapable of going up and down stairs at any great pace. The distance from Daulis to our meeting-place was estimated at an hour and a half; but the expiration of that period finds us advanced less than half-way, so it seems best to

push on afoot. The mist is dense and cheerless; but when the clouds roll momentarily away, there are fine glimpses of tall mountain-sides, and sometimes of both seas together—the Gulf of Corinth and the Straits of Eubœa,—a pretty good indication of the height now attained by the track. At a certain point this branches off in two directions. It is the famous *τρίδος*, where join the roads from Daulis, Ambrysos, and Delphi, and where Laius¹ met his death at the hand of Œdipus, his unconscious son. The old gentleman was driving at the time, and his chariot filled up the roadway; his attendants thrust Œdipus from the track, and hence the unhappy quarrel. It would be a strange vehicle that could pass that way to-day, or indeed get there at all.

The *σχιστέ-
ῖδος*.

A long convoy of mules appears at this point, and the looks of the drivers suggest the prudence of not imitating Œdipus in falling out with them single-handed. But our demeanour is so singularly unaggressive that nothing unpleasant occurs, and the route turns up a magnificent valley, shut in between the towering walls of Parnassus and Xerovouni, the Dry Mount—a name which there is little in the circumstances of the moment to suggest. Two men are hereabouts overtaken, who turn out to belong to our suite. They had been sent back to Chæronea for the unfortunate cook's greatcoat, he having been early reminded by the rain of having forgotten it. But the trouble was wasted, our host of the previous night denying all knowledge thereof.

¹ Sophocles, *Œd. Tyr.* 798.

At length is reached the little *khani* of Ximeno, a solitary farmhouse where the rest of the party are installed at luncheon, very grateful after an eight hours' fast. Lounging about are a quantity of ruffianly-looking fellows, ugly customers to meet alone on a dark night, mostly of great strength and stature, and armed to the teeth with knives and antiquated firearms. These gentry profess to be shepherds, but give very little attention to their flocks, whose bells are heard far away in the mountain-hollows where they wander at their own discretion.

Arakhova.

Another hour and a half brings us to Arakhova, a small town, literally on this occasion in the clouds. It stands on the almost perpendicular side of Parnassus, at an elevation of about 4000 feet, and well deserves its ancient name of *Ἀνεμόπεια*, the "Mountain City of the Winds." It is famous for the excellence of its wine and the beauty of its damsels; but we had no opportunity of judging of either, the one being concealed in resin, and the other not happening to be on view at that particular moment. A visit to the demarch with the circular letters soon draws forth that functionary, who sends to procure us lodgings, and then takes us into his office. Hither come crowding all the elders of the people, who sit around and gaze and listen. All are habited in the picturesque national dress except the demarch, who draws attention to the dignity of his functions by a frock-coat and high hat. The conversation is conducted in French, and then interpreted for the public benefit; and as we have not owned to understanding Greek, the result is rather amusing.

A village con-
clave.

For instance, after some talk about European politics, and much abuse (in Greek) of the monster Lord Beaconsfield, we turn to the engrossing topic of the general election.

Demarch. "Of course the Government has every chance of obtaining a majority, having power to coerce local officials and individual electors?"

Englishmen. "On the contrary, there is always a strong tendency to vote against a Ministry; so that, other things being equal, the Opposition has the best chance. In any case, force neither is nor can be employed."

Elders of the People (in chorus, after interpretation of the answer). "Absurd! Impossible! The lords are abusing our credulity."

And the answer has to be repeated twice before they can credit any Government with so ludicrous a neglect of its opportunities.

Demarch (prompted by an elder). "Why does not your Cabinet force the Porte to fulfil its pledges and surrender Thessaly and Epirus to Greece, thereby freeing those lands from the darkness of Turkish oppression, and unfolding to them the glorious light of Hellenic liberty?"

Englishmen (mildly). "Remember that the Porte never pledged itself to make these concessions; also, that England is only one out of six Great Powers, and cannot single-handed control the action of Europe."

Chorus of strong ejaculations expressive of speechless indignation.

Demarch (changing subject). "What do you wish to see in this neighbourhood?"

Englishmen. "Delphi, the Corycian cave, and, if possible, to make the ascent of Parnassus."

Demarch. "That is out of the question; the snow is six feet deep."

An Elder (his voice rising above the general murmur). "Besides, it's fearfully cold up there."

Demarch (contemptuously to the interrupter). "You fool! as though any Englishman minded that. They're used to nothing else."

An uxorious
husband.

The interview over, we scramble up and down the precipitous streets, and then adjourn to the lodging discovered for us by the authorities. Mine host is distinctly of a comic turn, and apologises for his wife's absence on the ground that she is out working in the fields: this, he remarks with many chuckles, is what he always makes her do. After dinner, it is discovered that all the bedding has been drenched during the day's rain, and no kind of attempt made to dry it. Doubting the assertion that there is no fire fit for the purpose, we make our way to the kitchen, and not only have our pains for our trouble, but also inspire the master of the house with the idea of accompanying us back to our room, where he sits down and makes himself at home, and enters into a long and familiar conversation. There is, perhaps, no more astounding aspect of the national character than the way in which a householder, having extorted a fancy price for a night's use

of a single room, devoid of carpet or furniture, will play the genial host, invade his "guests" at all hours, insist upon hobnobbing with them, and finally, on their departure, clamorously demand a *baksheesh*, and expect to be warmly thanked for his "hospitality." Our present host made us register a pious vow never again, on any similar occasion, to let out that we understood the language of the country. He produced two complimentary letters, written to him by an English clergyman who had once stayed in his house, and proceeded to read them out with much emphasis and appropriate action. Towards the conclusion, perceiving his audience disposed to slumber—which, towards midnight, was hardly, under the circumstances, unnatural—he remarked, "I fear I bore you," and not being contradicted, left the aforesaid audience to their damp couches.

A feeling of indisposition next morning proves the inadvisability of walking all day upon an insufficient allowance of food and sleep, as well as the desirability of dry beds when practicable. Our dragoman accounts for the phenomenon differently. "Ah, gentlemen!" he remarks, with feeling, "what can you expect if you will use those nasty cold baths in the morning?" At breakfast there takes place an irruption of the Theban drivers, who, with their beasts, have been sent to the right-about so soon as an opportunity of procuring fresh animals presented itself. They insist upon shaking hands warmly all round two or three times over. It subsequently appears that this is a strong hint that a *baksheesh* would be agreeable;

but, considering their conduct and the circumstances of their dismissal, the hint is not taken.

Mounted on mules—a vast improvement upon the horses—we scramble up the jagged rocks. Thick rainy clouds hide the prospect. Rounding the summit of the Phædriades rocks, the crags that overhang Delphi, we come upon a natural basin, a little plain once the property of the temple, and even now looking strangely fertile in the midst of those stony solitudes. In the centre is a tiny lake, from which a stream flows into the rocks and vanishes, to reappear, according to common belief, as the Castalian fount. At one end of the plain rises a great conical hill, containing the Corycian grot. This cave, pronounced by Pausanias to be the largest in the world, is well worth the trouble of a visit; which, in spite of the old traveller's assertion that the grotto can be reached by a "horse, or mule, or active man," can now most certainly be accomplished only by the biped. An ascent of about twenty minutes, hand-over-hand, will bring one to the mouth in a state of considerable exhaustion. Pausanias' statement that it can be inspected without a torch is almost true of the first chamber; for though 100 yards in length, it is so high and wide throughout, that the light from the entrance penetrates almost to the back. The visitor, however, will probably rue any attempt to test the truth of Pausanias' suggestion, considering the uneven lie of the floor, slippery with constant drippings, and affording effectual stumbling-blocks in the shape of huge masses of stalagmite. As in

The Corycian
cave.

all limestone caves that have not been expressly protected, the smaller and more graceful stalactite formations have long ago been broken away, and nothing remains but the huge lumps that probably were already stout enough to resist the destructive efforts of the aboriginal inhabitants of the district.

At the end of this great hall the floor and roof seem to meet; but there is just room to pass between them up a jagged and slippery incline into the second chamber, some thirty yards in length. We are accompanied by our mule-teers and a chance shepherd or two—most villanous-looking gentry, who suggest the advisability of our waking the echoes with a few shots from our revolvers. The effect is certainly good, the sound rolling round the hollows of the lofty ceiling, and coming back with increased volume. They are so anxious for a repetition of the performance that it strikes us as not altogether prudent, considering the scene and the company, to empty all the chambers of our weapons, and thereby effectively to disarm ourselves.

After luncheon beside a tarn just under the cave, the word is given to march for Delphi, and the train moves off through some miles of pine-forest. Very charming is this glimpse of Greek wooded scenery, accentuating the irreparable loss sustained by the greater part of the country in the destruction of the timber. Water becomes at once more plentiful—an invariable rule where the trees have been preserved—and lends an extra charm to scenery almost unrivalled, the sea being added to the ordinary components of an alpine landscape.

Skirmish with
dogs.

The savagery of nature in these highlands seems impressed upon all things, inanimate or living; and even the dogs have increased in ferocity, like the human inhabitants. The canine species in Greece has always largely exhibited this trait. Hereditary experience has stamped upon the mental structure of the race a firm, and in the main accurate conviction, that the intentions of strangers are evil. Trained, therefore, to constant watchfulness against fierce beasts and fiercer men, the Hellenic sheep-dog affords an element of danger by no means unworthy of precaution. But one thing has always, from the days of Homer¹ up till now, checked his impetuosity, —he cannot abide a stone, and luckily these missiles are plentiful in most parts of Greece. Should there be none to hand, the pilgrim must take his choice between shooting his assailants or being rent in pieces; and the difference between these alternatives is less than might have been expected, seeing that the first course will certainly expose him to violence, and perhaps death, at the hands of the owners, who thoroughly enjoy witnessing the prowess of their *protégés*, make no attempt to call them off, and resent any unavoidable injury

¹ Hom. Od. xiv. 29 :—

Ἐξιπίνης δ' Ὀδυσῆα ἶδον κύνες ἑλακόμωροι.
οἱ μὲν κεκλήγοντες ἐπέδραμον· αὐτὰρ Ὀδύσευς
ἔξετο κερδοσύνη· σκῆπτρον δέ οἱ ἔκπεσε χειρός.
ἔνθα μὲν ᾗ παρὰ σταθμῷ ἀεικέλιον πάθεν ἄλγος·
ἀλλὰ συβώτης ᾧ κα ποσὶ κραιπνοῖσι μετασπῶν
ἔσσυτ' ἀνὰ πρόθυρον· σκύτος δέ οἱ ἔκπεσε χειρός.
τοὺς μὲν ὁμοκλήσας σέυεν κύνας ἄλλυδις ἄλλη
πυκνήσιν λιθάδεσσιν· ὁ δὲ προσέειπεν ἄνακτα.

inflicted upon them in self-defence as keenly as though it were personal to themselves. But up in Parnassus canine assaults become an exciting sport, as constituting about the only circumstance under which a human being is justified in indulging in the unspeakable delight of heaving stones with all his might at a living mark. So at every attack we jumped from our mules in order to engage the enemy. Ammunition there was plenty, and a very rapid fire was often necessary. At times he got within ten yards, but never succeeded in closing. He would also display considerable strategical powers: having vented his wrath upon some of the missiles, he would feign defeat, and retire *en masse* with his tail between his legs, only to spring out in disagreeable proximity from some boulders farther on.

At last begins the almost endless zigzag that leads down to Delphi, over slippery rock the whole way. The guide and Delphi. cook still stick to their mules, until one of them rolls over unpleasantly close to the precipice, when they follow our example and condescend to walk. At sunset we pass through the dirty little hamlet of Kastri, built upon the very foundations of the great temple of the Pythian Apollo, to the priest's house beyond, once a monastery, standing in an olive-grove on the left of the Castalian stream. Man has done his utmost to efface this world-renowned centre of religion, which for a thousand years retained its hold upon the belief or superstition of humanity. But nature defies his efforts, and her works are still complete, to fill the beholder with awe and

reverence. The town stood, like the "cavea" of an ancient theatre, in the form of a semicircle on the mountain-side. Many terraces in abrupt succession supply the analogy of tiers of seats. At the bottom, as it were in the "orchestra," winds the bed of the Pleistos, now called the Dry River, and opposite rises the long wall of Kirphis, answering to the "scena" or background of the stage. Straight above the town, or rather overhanging it, are the huge Phædriades rocks, split in twain by a narrow cleft. Ignorant writers and poets have often confused them with the twin summits of Parnassus. Delphi being on the Parnassus range, it was of course justifiable to transfer some of its attributes and sanctity to the whole mountain. But the two great culminating points are miles behind the town, and completely hidden until the Phædriades have been surmounted. A glance at these precipices explains the alleged miraculous delivery of the shrine both from Persian and Celtic desecration. On each occasion huge masses of rock are said to have detached themselves and fallen upon the impious barbarian hosts, amid earthquake and thunder and the appearance of the native heroes, reawakened from the dead to defend their much-loved and sacred home.

A minute examination on the following day adds but little to the awe and interest excited by the first general view. There is the Castalian fount springing forth in the fissure between the two rocks. A landslip five years ago choked the source, which is not yet clear of *debris*. The quadrangular

Castalian
fount.



DELPHI.

stone basin wherein the water was collected is, however, again cleaned out. The natural rock behind it has been scarped, and sundry little niches cut to contain votive offerings. This holy stream, employed in all the ritual of the sanctuary, is now extraordinarily scanty. Perhaps it was never much more abundant, and merely offers a striking instance of the Greek capacity for surrounding trivial things with a halo of beauty and good taste: perhaps, like the Pleistos, it shrank before the dread voice that drove Apollo "with hollow shriek" from "the steep of Delphos" and his old prophetic shrine.

Leaving this now, alas! not too limpid stream, we inspect the other remains, consisting of little more than the foundations of old buildings, which on that steep declivity were obliged to be unusually massive. Unlike most of the walls that the traveller is daily called upon to visit, there is one at Delphi which is really interesting. It appears to have formed part of the substructions of the temple, and dates from a remote antiquity. It may be called "Pelasgic," because composed of polygonal blocks; but unlike other Pelasgic constructions of the more cultivated period, their lines are not straight, but sinuous beyond conception. Yet, in spite of this extreme irregularity, each stone fits into its neighbour with perfect accuracy, and retains its place without cement or fastening of any kind. Subsequently the outer surface was smoothed, and is now a mass of inscriptions relating to every kind Inscriptions. of business of which the temple was the centre—such as

the liberation of slaves, appointments of consuls in foreign towns, grants to the use of the sanctuary, and numerous other subjects.

Arrival of reinforcements.

About this time our three friends, whom we have been preceding all the way, ride into Kastri, and join their forces to ours. Rumour seems as usual to have lied—at least none of the reported twenty-five soldiers have accompanied them on the way; but we have seen quite enough men at intervals along the road to prove that the Government thought it advisable to keep a sharp watch over our safety in this wild region.

Phocian manners.

Having started later on for the sea, we dismount on the other side of the village to inspect some tombs cut in the rock, as well as the stadium, the scene of the famous Pythian games. This lies above the road, and commands a far more extensive prospect than the town. On going down to rejoin our animals, we find that the men have moved on some distance, and have taken advantage of our short absence to “lose” one of our greatcoats—a serious matter at this uncertain season. One of them is sent back to look for it, and of course never rejoins the party: he only forfeits some twelve drachmæ for two days’ hire of his beast, and gets in exchange a, to him, most valuable garment. Although rid of one ruffian, our troubles with these gentry are by no means over. They give signs of open insubordination. For instance, their advance during our visit to the stadium was in direct contravention of orders; and this disobedience was meant to serve as

a protest against delay, it being their object to deposit us at the sea and get back before sunset. During the almost precipitous descent upon Crissa, there is an approach to mutiny. On one of the saddle-bows hangs a large revolver: its size has on all occasions made it an object of envy to the natives. One of the drivers suddenly whips it off and pockets it. The rider cannot talk Greek, but is heard from behind expostulating in very choice English. We ride up and find the driver feigning not to understand his meaning: even when this has been interpreted to him, it requires a display of the stick to make him give up his prize. He apologises on the plea that the steepness of the track put the instrument in danger of falling off—an undoubtedly true position; but then it would have run a much greater risk of being lost if once transferred to his custody. About ten minutes afterwards his predictions are verified, and the pistol actually drops off, when he again seizes it, and again condescends to relinquish it only upon the application of some very personal arguments. After detecting and frustrating a third attempt, the owner fastens the weapon to his person, and so escapes further trouble.

Enlivened by these little incidents the descent goes on steadily (except when a refractory mule stops to do a little kicking, and thereby disorganises the whole cavalcade), right through the village of Kryssos, the ancient Crissa (not to be confused with Cirrha, the seaport of Delphi), down upon the fertile Cirrhean plain. The whole was formerly claimed as

La Scala di
Salona.

sacred by the Delphic priests, and was apparently uncultivated even by them. The sacrilegious conduct of the Locri of Amphissa in venturing to utilise a part of this waste land, caused their condemnation by the Amphictyonic council and the outbreak of the Sacred War. Through the olive-groves that now cover its surface we trot on to La Scala di Salona, thankful to exchange perpendicular rock for level ground.

Kleptomania.

At this little port, some two miles from Cirrha, we establish ourselves, to wait the steamer that touches here between Patras and Corinth. Dining peaceably up in the balcony of a *khani*, we had a good opportunity of watching the manners of a Greek maritime population. Like their inland brethren, they appeared to have nothing to do but talk and pilfer. This last tendency was illustrated at the cost of the dragoon, who came up to announce with many whinings, that after spreading out his towels to dry in the large room below, he had gone to the door to give some instructions to the cook, and in that instant his possessions had been appropriated. There must have been several witnesses of the theft, but every person in the place denied knowledge of it; for in point of universal sympathy with crime, the Hellenic population is not far behind the Irish. These little transfers of property are effected with a truly marvellous rapidity. For example, on leaving the *khani* to go on board, one of the party recollected, before proceeding fifty yards, that his walking-stick was left up in the verandah. He returned at once for it,

only to find that in those few minutes the inmates had ransacked the scene of our repast and secured it.

About half-way between the shore and the steamer the boatmen suddenly lie to on their oars and demand a *baksheesh* rather peremptorily. We reply that all charges are settled by our respective dragomans, who have preceded us on board to make arrangements. They retort that dragomans are an evil race, given to underpaying those whom they employ. Seeing that an agreement has been already concluded, this contention seems rather beside the mark. On our consequently declining to consider the question before reaching the vessel, they at once begin to put the boat's head about, with a view to returning to land. An altercation with six armed rascals on the sea is certainly to be avoided, but firmness is necessary: a significant touch of our holsters produces a magical effect, the transit completes itself without further interruption, and we bid adieu to the gallant Phocians with little regret, feeling that, if their forefathers resembled them, no praise can be too high for Philip's severe punishment of their offences.

Further traits
of Phocian
character.

The boat is of course overcrowded, like all Greek steamers; but our guide has beaten the other one by a head, and secured the two last berths. The rest of the party have to be content to share the saloon sofas with crowds of natives, who beguiled the night-watches by conversing till daybreak. One of them also had a fit. So our friends were not in the best of humours in the morning. Nevertheless their sufferings were

valuable as giving birth to a theory likely to be of use to comparative ethnologists—namely, that the unproductiveness of the Greeks is due to their addiction to talk, which exhausts all the forces of the system. Undoubtedly, in the power of continuous exposition they could give “long odds and a beating” to French, Italians, or any other of the more loquacious races.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ARGOLID.

TO land at six on a drizzling morning, and subsequently to wait two hours for food, are bad auspices under which to begin a tour of the Peloponnese. Corinth is a brand-new town about a mile and a half from the old site, and being a seaport, appears to grow rapidly. At nine we leave our companions and start with a cavalcade of the same size as in northern Greece. The men are of quite a different stamp, with none of that cut-throat aspect which so disagreeably impresses the stranger in Phocis. One of the steeds possesses what they call an "English" saddle, of which the owner is extremely proud. It is true that its shape would evoke comment in Leicestershire or The Row, and its appointments are rather incomplete, the stirrup-leathers being represented by ropes of uneven lengths, and breaking on one side or the other at least six times a-day ; but in spite of these drawbacks, the apparatus admits of a seat upon the horse's back and a

grip of his sides, which, after having so long bestrode a towel-horse, is indeed a luxury.

Corinth.

Of Corinth, the centre of Greek luxury and refinement, the second home of art, architecture, and commerce, there remains nothing but the amphitheatre, now a mere hollow clothed with corn and weeds, and seven columns of an unknown temple. Their extreme squatness refers them to an early date: they are even more massive than those of Posidonium at Paestum,¹ being scarcely four diameters in height, and with capitals larger than those of the great Italian temple. Each shaft consists of only two drums; indeed the lower of these monoliths reaches to three-quarters of the total height, so that the effect, on close inspection, is somewhat peculiar. But at Corinth, as elsewhere, nature does much to make up for the decay of human handiwork; and the marvellous *Aerocorinth* frowns grandly above the desolate plain. A winding path on the west enables horses to mount to the outside of the fortifications, a very great convenience to the jaded tourist.

Aerocorin-
thus.

Passing through the gateway, he enters a perfect wilderness of building, Hellenic, Frank, Venetian, Turk, each occupant having left his mark upon this unique fortress. A whole town is there, with churches, mosques, towers, walls, and battlements. There is no living creature within this vast solitude: it is a very city of the dead, peopled, if at all, only by the shades of those who successively had dominion therein.

¹ See frontispiece.



REMAINS OF THE TEMPLE AT CORINTH.

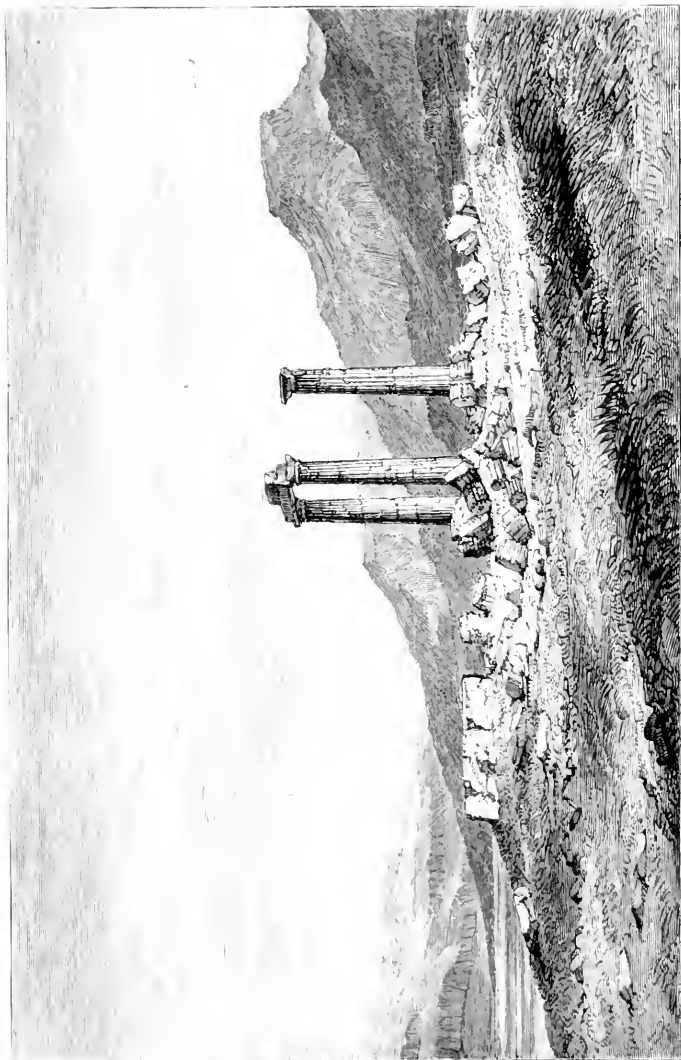
There is still one relic of antiquity—the fountain of Pirene, Fountain of Pirene. and its presence on this isolated height is certainly remarkable. Here legend states that Bellerophon caught Pegasus while unsuspectingly quenching his thirst. The spring was, of course, assigned to a miraculous origin. Zeus had carried off the daughter of the river-god Asopus, and Sisyphus, who had seen the rape, unwisely let out to the disconsolate father that he knew whither the maid was gone; but judging it prudent not to meddle with the affairs of the king of heaven, he declined to mention names. Much importuned by Asopus, he consented to make a revelation, on the apparently impossible condition that water should spring forth on the summit of Acrocorinth. These terms were at once fulfilled, and Sisyphus reluctantly disclosed the nymph's fate; which indiscretion, as every one knows, he expiated by immediate death, and a subsequent sentence of evermore rolling a huge rock up the side of a Tartarean hill.

To reach Mycenæ, there is a track due south through the root of the great promontory of the Argolid. It passes between Acrocorinth and an almost equally high stronghold called Pentephouka, and still crowned by a large Turkish ruin. Then it strikes for some miles over steep rocky ground looking very dismal in the unceasing downpour of rain. At length it enters upon a small plain broken by low hills and intersected by streams, where the soil becomes sandy and fit for riding. In a sort of dale hard by, a single wall marks the site where Cleonæ once stood. Earthquake has laid low more Cleonæ.

than one modern village on this spot, but after each disaster fresh houses have risen. This hamlet contains a house with a "guest chamber," a long, low apartment, ventilated copiously through the tiled roof, but actually containing two settees by way of furniture. While engaged in settling down, the guide remarks cheerfully that two Germans are coming there for the night. Observing that we receive the announcement with little show of interest, he goes on to ask which end of the room we should like to occupy; and then it flashes across us that the landlord, having already let the place once over for the night, intends to do a sort of Box-and-Cox business, and secure double rent. Considering, however, that there are other houses in the place, we firmly but respectfully decline to be intruded upon by two perfect strangers, who, as we subsequently learned, had no difficulty in procuring accommodation elsewhere.

Nemea.

Next morning, a slight deviation from the road to Argos brings us to Nemea, a very pretty spot. To celebrate the triumph of Heracles over the dreaded lion, a festival was instituted which took rank among the four great pan-Hellenic assemblies. No town grew up at this place; it was simply a *hieron* containing a sacred grove, temple, and stadium. The whole stood in a little smiling valley, watered by a winding brook, enjoying perpetual solitude, except when gay multitudes from Cleonæ assembled to witness the prowess of the athletes and to celebrate the victories of Heracles—in plain language, those conquests of human skill over nat-



RUINED TEMPLE AT NEMEA.

ural evil by which alone man's life has been rendered endurable.

The racecourse is remarkably wide for its length, cut right into the hill. Nothing can be stronger than the contrast between this stadium and that other at Delphi where we so lately stood. There the surroundings are snowy peaks, sheer precipices, pine-forests, and sea; here, all are gentle as in an English landscape—a narrow prospect of low grassy hills bounding a fertile plain covered with grass, corn, and aromatic shrubs.

Of the temple, three pillars are erect and a small part of the cella walls. These columns exhibit Doric architecture at its lightest, as those of Corinth show it at its heaviest development. So graceful are they as to suggest an Ionic edifice, and it is almost a surprise to discover on a nearer approach the simple, unornamented capitals.

Following the course of a considerable stream, we pursue our way along the remains of what Pausanias calls the *τηρητὴ ὁδός*, or “road full of holes,” and describes as practicable for carriages: it is still as uneven as can be, but would barely be passable for a wheelbarrow. After a couple of hours, Mycenæ Mycenæ. appears on the left of the track. The subject of this ever-famous ruin is too vast to be more than touched upon here. Attempts to harmonise the discrepant versions of the many legends attaching to the mighty house of Atreus, fail as utterly to give a satisfactory explanation of the Mycenaean remains as do judgments based solely upon those remains

without reference to tradition. The town itself, so conspicuous in Homeric story, was destroyed by Argos, certainly not later than the middle of the fifth century B.C., in consequence, it is supposed, of the jealousy of that powerful neighbour, whose mean desertion of the national cause during the Persian war was emphasised by the fact that eighty Myceneans joined the forces under Leonidas at Thermopylae. But though not destroyed till after the Persian war, it had for practical purposes disappeared before the dawn of history, since the Dorian inhabitants of Argos, irreconcilably hostile to the older race which still lived on so near them, had long since reduced their city to insignificance. The great stronghold of the line of Pelops thus became a desert, and has altered little for 2000 years.

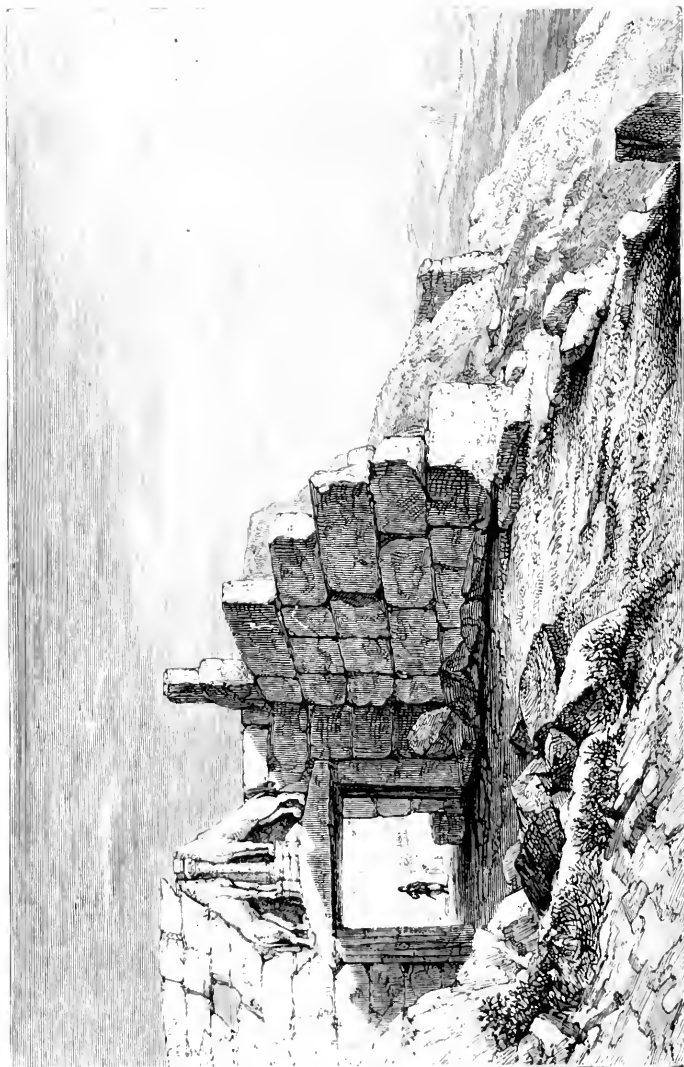
Treasury of
Atreus.

The citadel occupies an isolated rock on the edge of the mountains — a position of immense strength, commanding alike the plain and the passes. Across a little valley is a long low hill, the first rise from the level ground, and in this are the famous “treasuries.” This name they have always borne, and must consequently be so designated; only it is highly doubtful whether they were not built for tombs rather than for treasure-houses. Tradition may well be pardoned if it has here committed an error. The great wealth of the Pelopid kings is everywhere insisted upon in epic and in drama, and seems to have been the source of that superiority over contemporary chieftains which is so constantly attributed to this mysterious house of foreign, probably non-Hellenic,

origin. When, then, in later ages, men saw on the spot subterranean chambers of massive strength, it was not unnatural to hold that they had been used to store this wealth away. But the fact that they are outside the citadel, at once throws serious doubts over this belief. Unfortunately, no recorded excavations have helped to solve the question by bringing to light either treasure or human remains. But be they treasuries or tombs, these buildings will remain one of the wonders of the world. Two out of four have fallen to pieces; about half of a third is left; the fourth is complete. The form is that of a huge beehive built within the hill—the entrance by a way excavated in the hillside. The material employed consists of huge stones rising above each other in gradually diminishing concentric circles, cut smooth after being put in place, small stones being forced into the aperture thus created in front between each layer; so that there is a lining of extraordinary evenness. The dome is purely self-supporting, without clamps or cement, and, besides its own enormous weight, has to bear the pressure of the earth above. The workmanship and size of the blocks have been often described. The lintel alone is 26 feet long by 20 thick, and is calculated to weigh over 150 tons. A generation capable of executing work at once so stupendous and so elaborate, may have been prehistoric, but was certainly not barbaric. The topmost stone, a sort of cover to the whole, has been removed, and from the summit of the hill one can look down into the darkness below. Unlike the ordinary vault, this structure was

in no way dependent upon its coping, and remains just as firm without it. A small bonfire may be lit with great effect, and reveals a chamber opening out of the main building, where traces are still visible of the futile explorations of some pre-Schliemannic German archaeologist who had not that great man's nose for smelling out antiquities.

The Acropolis. From these strange buildings a few steps lead to the foot of the Acropolis, with its massive walls and famous lion-gate. The lifelike attitude of these rampant beasts argues much civilisation in the unknown race that carved and set them up. A similar ornament appears to have once stood over the lintel of the "treasury," where there is now an empty triangular space. The architecture is both "Cyclopean" and "Pelagic." The first term is applied to rough blocks put loosely together, with their interstices filled by smaller stones; the latter to blocks of various polygonal shapes, but cut so as to fit into each other with more or less accuracy. The Pelagic part of the Mycenaean walls presents a perfectly smooth surface, and has no crannies to be filled up. Both the lion-gate and the other at the north are approached by a narrow alley, in order to expose assailants to a cross-fire at close quarters from the defenders. These alleys are lined with stones even more nearly approaching the "Hellenic" or Greek architecture proper; for they are tetragonal and closely fitted, but not always rectangular. Thus in one set of fortifications traditionally referred to a single date, and in any case of extreme antiquity, are specimens of the three great



THE LION'S GATE AT MYCENAE.

periods into which all buildings on Greek soil have generally been divided. The excellent workmanship of the "treasury," the lions, and some parts of the wall, find a parallel in many of the articles discovered by Dr Schliemann within the citadel. The cunning thus displayed gives much food for reflexion: it belongs to an age which we were once taught to regard as barbarous in that country; it has nothing in common with the development of Hellenic art and architecture; the customs illustrated by the excavations do not even accord with Homeric life and habits. Thus this wondrous Argolid, centre of power and wealth in the Homeric legend, seems to be the grave of an older and pre-Hellenic civilisation. The lions, for instance, are far more lifelike than the stiff archaic sculptures of later date which immediately preceded the emancipation and perfection of Greek plastic art: the human figures with heads of animals point to a religious spirit very different from that revealed in Greek literature, with its invariable tendency to humanise its deities: the accessories of a great funeral, as revealed in these tombs, are in strange contrast with the rites so minutely described in the Homeric poems. These considerations do not disprove the identity of Dr Schliemann's relics with the characters known in legend as Agamemnon and Cassandra; but they do prove, if we admit this supposition, that the conditions of life had radically changed in the interval between the age of this great chief-tain and that at which the early rhapsodists sang. These last, being devoid of the "historic sense," would naturally

Dr Schliemann's excavations.

attribute to the men of old time the habits obtaining in their own days.

Identification
of the dis-
covered re-
mains.

We arrive, therefore, at the comfortable conclusion that the date and ownership of Dr Schliemann's treasure are matters vague and indeterminate, and that much speculation on the matter is but lost labour. Nothing proves this more abundantly than the great excavator's ponderous volume on Mycenæ: his claims as a scholar or archaeologist are far from commensurate with his claims as a discoverer; and the book illustrates almost ludicrously the perplexity induced by the various aspects of the question. That Agamemnon, with his mistress and companions, were all interred within the Acropolis at Mycenæ, was apparently the belief of Pausanias, who says¹ that Agamemnon and his comrades murdered with him are certainly buried at Mycenæ, although there is some doubt about the tomb commonly assigned to Cassandra. Then he proceeds: "Clytemnestra and Egisthus were buried a little way from the wall, but were deemed unworthy to rest inside, where Agamemnon and those murdered with him were lying." Now there has been no mention of a city wall—only of the celebrated wall of the Acropolis; so we are justified in assuming that Pausanias believed the remains of the murdered king to repose within the citadel. Undoubtedly this passage suggested to Dr Schliemann the institution of his successful search, and we have little beyond it to guide us. The Greek dramatists seem uncertain whether to place the scene of Aga-

¹ Paus. ii. 16, 3.

memnon's death and sepulture at Argos or Mycenæ. The destruction of the latter city caused them to merge it mentally in the former; but the name Argos is used of the district as well as of the town, so that we have an additional difficulty in determining at which place the scene is laid. In the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus, the "Electra" of Sophocles, and the "Electra" of Euripides, the topographical notices are too vague to enable us to decide. The Homeric account distinctly places the murder in neither town. In the *Odyssey*,¹ Menelaus, brother of the murdered king, tells his young guest Telemachus how the foul deed was accomplished. Agamemnon, sailing back from Troy, was driven southward off Cape St Elmo, and eventually landed, not close at home, but at some distant part of the Argolid—"the land's end, where erst dwelt Thyestes, but now Ægisthus, Thyestes' son." Here the treacherous cousin had kept unceasing watch for the king's return. His plans were laid: he invited his unsuspecting kinsman to his house, and slew him at the board, "like an ox in the stall." This perpetration of the murder in an out-of-the-way place, in Ægisthus' own home, gives it a different aspect from the version followed by the tragedians; but knowing that great honours were paid by the guilty pair to the outraged shades of their victims, it is natural for us to suppose that they were buried with much pomp and circumstance in the capital. The charred human skeletons discovered so recently, hardly recall to us the "gigantic frame

¹ Hom. *Od.* iv. 517.

of the King of Men, or the fairy form of Cassandra." But at any rate, Dr Schliemann has exhumed some powerful chief of olden time, laid to rest amid his wives and retainers, and decked out with golden ornaments amid possessions which he cherished while yet alive.

The excavations have scarcely altered the aspect of the place. Just within the lion-gate is a nearly circular space containing six empty tombs, surrounded by a narrow passage formed by a double row of upright flagstones. All the precious contents have luckily been removed to Athens, except a single ghastly object kept in a cottage hard by. It is a half-burnt mass in which a close inspection reveals the shape of human bones, and the outlines of a human face more than mummy-like in its hideousness; the teeth alone are clear and distinct. It is incapable of removal or exposure to the air; so here it remains under glass, and not even the guardian calls it the corpse of Agamemnon.

Argos.

An hour and a half over the plain brings us to the squalid little town of Argos. The wind has dropped, and we realise the charms of a Greek spring sunset, such as early training has taught us to expect. The effect is very soothing to frames exhausted by exposure to incessant gales and rain. Up the dirty street we pass, followed by an increasing concourse. A halt is called in front of a fishmonger's shop, through which we proceed into a fold-yard beyond—thus for once cheating native curiosity. Nevertheless a few loiterers are always waiting outside at whatsoever hour of the day or night we

may chance to emerge, and a cry of "Lords" at once collects a little crowd. It is very gratifying to be a public character, but a retiring nature sometimes feels overwhelmed with the honour.

An encampment is soon accomplished in the bare back-room, and to help to while away the bad hour or two which invariably precede dinner, we send out for a newspaper. An Athens journal of some antiquity is procured, wherein a single cold-blooded telegram curtly announces that out of 278 seats the Radicals have gained about 32, and that even the Conservative press has accepted a change of Ministry. Such an announcement is startling in a degree hardly appreciable by those whose minds have been gradually prepared for the result through the events of each successive day. The blow is embittered by the ill-suppressed exultation of the noble Hellenes, who fancy that their chance has now indeed come.

Upon tempers thus sweetened, there fell an immediate, and consequently hardly less acute annoyance. Our guileless Maltee, in demanding fresh supplies, gives occasion to go into accounts, whence we discover that he is treating one of the horses and men, wine, and a few other little trifles, as extras, in spite of the accurate agreement in which all these incidental expenses were included. Not feeling in the humour to submit to extortion, we decline absolutely to concede his claims; whereupon he hints darkly at leaving us to get away as best we can. Now cooks, beds, and kitchens do not grow on every tree of the Morea, and we begin to recollect

News from
home.

A dragoman's
charming sim-
plicity.

that no amount of legal right on our side would compensate us for the fearful inconvenience of being left to find our own way out of the mess; so we control our rising choler, and determine to ride into Nauplia, and see if we can there discover any substitute.

The Argive
plain.

Accordingly, keeping dark our fell purpose, we next day select the three most fiery of our horses, and leaving behind Mr Dragoman, who thoroughly appreciates the holiday, start under the protection of the most agreeable of our staff, a youth named Anastasius. The plain on this side of Argos is very different from the portion we had traversed on the preceding evening. It is unlike most parts of Greece, for the soil is not only fertile but cultivated; and all along the excellent road leading to Nauplia are corn-fields, vineyards, tobacco-plantations, and orange-orchards, showing what industry might make of Greece if any such virtue could be roused in the breast of the average inhabitant. Walled gardens, with respectable houses attached, occur not unfrequently, and altogether this little bit of country recalls southern Italy rather than Greece. The illusion is further increased by the unusual quantity of vehicles upon the road plying to and fro between the two towns, this being a great feast-day at Nauplia.

Nauplia.

An untimely downfall of rain makes us leave Tiryns for the return journey and push on to the port. Nauplia is a pretty town overhung by the great Palamedes rock. It was provisionally the capital of the country for some years after



NAUPLIA, FROM TIRYNS.

the war of independence, and exhibits attempts at civilisation, such as pavement in the streets and glass in the shop-windows. But as a proof of the backwardness of even so highly favoured a place as this, we may mention that unresined wine was obtainable only at one shop, where a single kind of bottled native liquor was to be procured: we never afterwards enjoyed even this modicum of luck. The eparch of Pyrgos subsequently explained to us that his countrymen so greatly preferred the flavour of turpentine to that of the grape, as to render any importation of the decent Greek vintages absolutely unremunerative.

After duly visiting the little harbour and handsome old gateway of the town, which once more made us wonder how the "sons of the Hellenes" would ever have got on but for the Venetian occupation, we bethink us of the main purpose of our visit, and turn about to look for advice and information. In spite of the festival, the population has retired indoors to avoid the rain. We at length elicit the fact that there is no English vice-consul in Nauplia, but are directed to the abode of the protector of Italian commerce—an independent foreign opinion being our main object. Unfortunately, he turns out to have gone to Mycenæ, in order to receive there with due honour the friends from whom we parted at Corinth; but a gentleman inhabiting a flat in the same house politely asks us to walk up-stairs. He proves to be a money-lender, and talks excellent English, but understands with some difficulty the nature of our requirements, having probably never been

into the interior or given a thought as to how such expeditions are carried out. Anything like a guide, with the necessary appliances, he pronounces to be an unknown animal at Nauplia; so, after a further interchange of civilities, we take our leave.

Outside we come in for a quaint, but to ourselves unpleasing, spectacle. The band of the garrison is bearing down upon us, lustily playing the Greek national anthem. Anastasius is standing outside holding the three horses, who hitherto have occasioned little difficulty. But the excruciating sound of this strange martial music arouses all the fire dormant within their breasts, and the whole lot commence a sort of Pyrrhic dance, dragging round and round the unhappy youth, who manfully hangs on to the end of the reins and halters. Our amusement gives place to disgust when, before we have time to intervene, rugs and greatcoats fly off in various directions and fall in the oozy street amid the crash of broken wine-bottles. However, order is soon restored, and we ride out towards Argos.

Natural history of the Greek horse.

On the way, we draw out Anastasius, who himself owns two of the horses, and knows all about the third. The two with halters are respectively 23 and 20 years of age, while the spirited animal with the "English" saddle is a mere colt of 15: "but then," says the proud owner, "his heart is young." We think once more of the Pickwickian cab-horse, and assume that this longevity is due to the humane system of morally never unharnessing these animals. Our temporary leader has been all along very proud of his position of con-

fidence, and is deeply pained at having been degraded before the military and burgesses of Nauplia. Like the rest of our Peloponnesian *employés*, he is a vast improvement on the northern Greeks, of whose surly impudence he, for one, has no trace. He gives us a good deal of information, and fully understands that we eat meat because the Lent of the Western Churches is already past ; but he evidently has serious doubts whether the members of those religious bodies can be classed as Christians. Moreover, he volunteers some songs ; but after hearing one or two, we earnestly beg him not to injure his voice by continuing.

Close to the roadside, about half-way round the bay, are Tiryns. the eternal walls of Tiryns, that other mighty remnant of the heroic age in the Argolid. Like Mycenæ, it fell a prey to the Argives, who forcibly removed the inhabitants into their own city, and left it a desert. Ruder and more massive than Mycenæ, it answers well to the current belief that it was “piled by the hands of giants for godlike kings of old.” It represents Cyclopean architecture *in excelsis*. Blocks so huge that, says Pausanias,¹ “a yoke of mules could not move the very smallest of them,” are piled up some 40 feet in height and 50 in thickness, a breadth of 7 or 8 being in places observable. The whole structure rests upon a low hill rising like an island from the plain, and looks strangely weird and out of place amid the surrounding cultivation. At the entrance, on the side towards Nauplia, are two galleries

¹ Pans. ii. 25, 8.

within the thickness of the wall, one at least a hundred feet long. Whether these were used for purposes of ambuscade to conceal the men told off to defend the gate, or simply as armouries for the garrison, is a matter of the merest conjecture. Their shape and construction are very peculiar, and there is no egress at the farther end.

Such are the walls of Tiryns, to the Greek or Roman mind hardly less marvellous than the pyramids of Egypt. The interior has been raised by the accumulations of ages almost to the level of their top, and affords a pleasing solitude where the unlovely modern life around is quite shut out, and the eye rests only on a luxuriant growth of spring flowers, enlivened by the loving gambols of two hoopoes, and where the mind can speculate undisturbed upon the unknown people, at once so rude and so skilful, who laid these fragments in their place in the "midst of Argos"—that fertile sea-washed region where Perseus, Heracles, Danaus, Pelops, and the "king of men" held sway.

But it is time to get back to Argos, so as to explore that important city. Unfortunately, this work is very light, owing to the various destructions wrought upon the place. There is the large theatre, where about 60 tiers of seats are discernible; another small theatre near it, and a large castle on the high hill behind, with Pelasgic foundations, proving it to occupy the summit of the ancient Acropolis. Inside the town a large barrack is the most remarkable building, situated in a sort of piazza. It is more pretentious than the other small towns

of Greece, which are usually nothing but big villages—mere collections of cottages and farm-houses; but wherever the Venetians have been, there is invariably some improvement upon this state of things. In one respect, however, we failed to appreciate the admixture of Italian blood flowing in the veins of the Argive population: the rising generation of this place are most incurably addicted to begging, and cling to the stranger with a pertinacity equal to that of young *lazzaroni*. Elsewhere in Greece there is no mendicancy, force or fraud being popularly regarded as nobler and more successful modes of acquiring the property of other people.

But we had occasion to bless Argos for something besides its beggars. Hitherto, never having stayed more than one night in the same village, we had escaped the attacks of domestic insects. But here on the second evening they discovered us, and issued from their hiding-places in considerable force. We did not complain—the landlord would have been incapable of entering into the cause of our annoyance—but we “swore an oath and kept it,” with a mind as “equal” as the circumstances permitted, never again to remain anywhere for two consecutive days till we should have reached civilised latitudes.

Entomological studies.

In the morning we found our guide, philosopher, and friend in a very humble frame of mind, subdued by our firm attitude of the day before. So, with much inward thankfulness, we consented to finish our proposed tour on the original terms, promising him a liberal present if he gave satisfaction

throughout. His weak points thenceforth became doubly prominent. Through northern Greece and the Argolid we had followed a line with which he was familiar. We now proposed to give up visiting Laconia and Messenia, in order to traverse the Peloponnese by way of central Arcadia, fondly hoping to realise the pastoral descriptions of the Italian poets. Our dragoman, however, had never crossed except by way of Sparta, and either could not or would not admit the possibility of adopting the route suggested. Maps and guide-books declared that Tripolitza might be reached in a long day's journey from Argos; but he had never done it, and was not going to begin at his time of life—that was the sort of argument employed. At last he consented to consult native opinion, and returned with the startling information that Tsipiana was the point to make for, as being within a few hours of Megalopolis. In vain we pointed out that Tripolitza was in a straight line between these two places, and that consequently his proposal involved a needless *détour*: he declined to look at maps or books, which, as he could not read, could scarcely have made him much the wiser, and roundly reasserted the facts just furnished to him. Having long ceased to be surprised at anything, and knowing two sides of a triangle to be the direction usually followed in this country in order to get along the base, we gave way and departed for Tsipiana.

CHAPTER X.

HAPPY ARCADIA.

THE road out of the Argive plain is up a gentle slope, brilliant with anemones and purple irids, and dotted with picturesque shrubs. Then the track runs along a deep river-bed, where more than one broken Turkish bridge testifies to the "fecklessness" of the powers that be. The mid-day halt is by the water-side, where the bank widens out into a little plateau of the greenest turf sprinkled with wild olive-trees—one of those deep-soiled hollows so common in the limestone hills of England; but in this misused land no labour calls forth the fertility of such spots, and the bells of a flock sounding faintly from the mountains alone give signs of habitation. The post-prandial meditation is perturbed by one of the baggage-horses, who suddenly takes it into his head to roll upon the sward, crushing with an ill-omened sound the dressing-bags and valises upon his back. The flattening of our only paint-box, and consequent intermixture of its colours, is not the least irritating result of his light-heartedness.

A hopeful
young Argive.

For a long two hours we climb almost perpendicular rocks, the guide with his steed coming down on the brink of a yawning gulf; but not yet will he deign to walk. Just before the top of the pass the track utterly vanishes. In our perplexity we are met by a little boy driving a flock of goats. In spite of his tender years he declines to direct us except for a pecuniary consideration, and a display of the stick is necessary to induce him to alter his determination. A scramble through cloud and snow brings us over the ridge, whence far below us lie the plains of Arcadia clad in sunlight.

Tsipiana.

The descent is painful beyond description. Even the dragoman and the cook prefer trusting to their own legs, and the beasts are let go and allowed to find their own way down. We move gingerly along the rocky side of a sort of estuary of the table-land below, in shape like the "combes" of our southern coast. At the entrance lies Tsipiana, our destination, and on the towering summit on the left is a monastery, whence the brethren have a glorious prospect of the doings of the village at their feet.

Sending the men to make arrangements for the night, we sally forth to explore this little-known spot. Though visited under a mistake, it repaid us for the trouble. There is nothing to see in the way of antiquities, but geologically as well as historically it illustrates the condition of Happy Arcadia. The identity of its remains, consisting of a gateway and walls on the citadel, has never been satisfac-



PLAIN OF MANTINEA, FROM TSITANA.

torily established. Perhaps it was formerly Melangia ; but this uncertainty is only typical of that region, at the best of times little known and less civilised. Some occult centrifugal force prevented union or co-operation between the communities occupying this great table-land, and even Epaminondas's grand idea of gathering together their power in a common centre obtained but a qualified success. Thus the very names of these towns have perished, except a few, like Tegea and Mantinea, while none of them played a great part in history. The inhabitants were proverbial for want of culture, and so was the greater part of the district. The Greek poets never speak of Arcadia as the acme of picturesque beauty, the chosen home of faun and nymph and satyr. Such attributes originate with the Italian poets, and not even amongst the earliest of these. Neither did Greek pastoral poetry spring up amid the rustic swains of this country, as many persons suppose. Flat swampy plains, and low, rolling, treeless hills, do not evoke spontaneous bursts of song ; nor does an ungrateful soil produce that more quiet sense of thankfulness for nature's bounties, which in rich though unpicturesque lands sometimes finds an utterance in verse.

The plain wherein Tsipiana stands illustrates well the unfortunate conditions here alluded to. Just as we have seen a great part of the Boeotian lowlands to be a hopeless swamp, so do similar causes mar the fertility of this country, and the ancient name of Πεδίον Ἀργόν, or "Lazy Plain," is well deserved. Al-

The "Barren Plain."

most shut in by tall mountains, it receives torrents of rain-water from every side, and is drained insufficiently by a single stream whose only outlet is a magnificent *katarothron*. This phenomenon, so common in the Greek mountains, has its best illustration here. The acropolis forms a projecting spur of rock against which the torrent charges; an opening in the side receives it, and it vanishes into the bowels of the earth, only to reappear, as Pausanias believed, in the bed of the sea off a place called Dine in the Argolid. Within this cave were a considerable number of natives grinding corn at three small mills erected in the current. Mighty was their astonishment to see a European stranger suddenly appear at the entrance, while across him there flashed the thought how easily a push could send a man to destruction and oblivion down that boiling tide.

Returning to the village, we are directed to our lodging—a low dirty loft, rendered rather too airy by the displacement of some tiles in the roof. We think the demarch might have guided us to rather better quarters; but it appears that that functionary was “not at home” when the guide called upon him, so the latter promptly contracted for the first kennel offered. A stone floor does not make the draughts any warmer, neither are we specially gratified to perceive that the family and suite are to pass the night on the other side of a thin wooden partition. In come the host and his father (who, like Laertes in the ‘*Odyssey*,’ has made over the kingdom to his son), and show themselves very sociable, insisting

Another soci-
able host.

upon pledging us in our own wine, and upon our pledging them in theirs; which arrangement proved rather one-sided, as we could not swallow theirs, while they both could and did make serious inroads into our little store. We are asked lots of questions, but decline to understand them, so the conversation goes on in the following strain:—

Host. “How much did the lords pay for their revolvers, their boots, their watches?”

Dragoman. “Gentlemen, he begs you to be so very kind as to inform him of the value of these articles.”

Englishmen. “The revolvers are worth 2000 francs apiece, on account of their exquisite workmanship and extraordinary power; the boots cost 500, and the watches 20 francs.” (*Then, observing that the good gentleman has got hold of our cartridges, and is preparing to appropriate some:*) “Tell him that these cartridges are capable of going off at any moment if carelessly handled, and would blow the roof off.”

Host (*dragoman having interpreted*) hurriedly drops his plunder, and asks—“Are they lovers of freedom?” (*Greek for “Liberals”*).

Englishmen. “Tell him that freedom is dear to the heart of every Englishman, whether or no he belong to the political party styled Liberal, and that,” &c., &c.

Dragoman (*succinctly*). “No.” Disgust of host.

Englishman (*perceiving that he has picked up one of the watches and is attempting to wind it up with the corkscrew*). “Tell him to put that watch down, or I’ll,” &c., &c.

Dragoman. "The gentleman begs you to be so extremely good as to give up his watch, because, though very much obliged for your kind intentions, he has already wound it up."

Host. "Do they know Pausanias?"

Englishmen (*not wishing to own to a knowledge even of ancient Greek*). "Who is he? A friend of yours?"

Host. "Ancient writer."

Englishmen. "What did he write about?"

Host doesn't know. Conversation flags.

Englishmen (*to start a new topic*). "Ask him what sort of a fellow the demarch is."

Host (*immediately upon interpretation*). "Oh, such a beast!"

Englishmen burst out laughing before interpretation. *Host* stares.

Dragoman (*solemnly*). "He says he does not love him as a brother."

This sort of thing lasts for about two hours, after which our entertainer seems anxious to put us to bed, and tries to blow out the candles. As we have, of course, not undressed, we mildly object: but he seems to think it discourteous to leave us before the lights are out; so, plucking up courage, we say "good-night" in Greek, very pointedly. At about the sixth repetition, he takes the hint, and leaves us to the gentle slumber into which we soon sink, lulled by the excited arguments of the domestic circle in the adjoining apartment.

Next morning, during the course of our toilette, we are

visited by the members of the family, male and female, bringing coins and bronzes from the village antiquary. This unofficial functionary is an appendage to every hamlet, and apparently buys up on speculation anything that may be discovered in the neighbourhood. He knows nothing of the relative values of his wares; but assuming that purchasers will cheat him all they can, he asks some ludicrously high price for everything alike. None but professed numismatologists need look at these things, unless the traveller care to amuse himself by getting "a rise" out of the archaeologist by bidding a drachma for the whole lot, or making some other sarcastic offer. Indeed the country has been pretty well cleared of anything of value, and it would be the merest chance if the whole stock-in-trade were not composed of rubbish.

The village
archæologist.

Our leader now announces that it is possible to reach Andritsena that night, passing through an unknown place called Vedina. Now not only is the latter undiscoverable, but the whole distance looks about a two days' journey, to judge by our usual rate of progress. Still, supposing the natives to know best, we sally forth and emerge from the village, when, to our disgust, six soldiers come up and declare that they have strict orders to accompany us. The demarch, whom universal testimony declared to have been in his house all the time, has now found it convenient to be "at home:" to have directed us to lodgings would have caused him trouble; but to despatch an escort gives him none, and enhances his

Contradictory
information.

own dignity, while relieving him of all responsibility on our account.

In vain we assure the men that we can dispense with their services: their orders are peremptory to convoy us across the Alpheus. They also observe that our proposed route is impracticable, and that our only way to Andritsena is through Tripolitza, as we had maintained at Argos. Hereupon ensues an impassioned discussion, in which soldiers, natives, guide, and drivers partake—gesticulating, swearing, and all talking at once. As this state of things shows no signs of terminating, we break up the little groups of disputants with our sticks, and peremptorily order the march to begin. Debouching through the narrow neck which joins the great plain to the “Lazy,” and leaving to our right the low walls of Mantinea, we made our way over the ground whereon Epaminondas met his death in the moment of victory. The soil being soft and level, the occasion seemed favourable for improving upon our ordinary rate of progress, which, on the average, might be estimated at two miles an hour; so we urged our steeds into a sort of amble, and overtook the advanced-guard, who at once began to run in order to retain the lead. The sight of the poor fellows pounding along at the double, burdened with their rifles and greatcoats, was grotesque in the extreme. At last, in sheer pity, we pulled up, and pointed out the needless-ness of their exertions; but they answered that they had received strict injunctions to precede us. Now it was exactly this obedience that we were anxious to discourage, because the

Drawbacks of
an escort.

wind was blowing full in our teeth, and made us painfully aware of much garlie moving before us ; so that there was no chance of escaping the infliction except by ourselves getting in front of the nuisance. After long persuasion, we induced them to join their comrades in the rear, undertaking the full responsibility for any evils that might in consequence befall us.

At noon Tripolitza was entered—the most modern of towns. Tripolitza. Founded a century ago, it became the Turkish capital of the Peloponnese, but was utterly destroyed during the war of independence—hence its extreme newness. We had originally intended to rest there for the previous night, and ruefully contrasted its comfortable-looking houses with the den that had sheltered us at Tsipiana. This was but an everyday example of what the stranger may expect to suffer from the ignorance and mendacity of the rustics, who, uninformed of the existence of places within a day's ride of their homes, concoct mythical statements as to routes and distances, less perhaps from a love of practical joking than from a dislike of not seeming to know better than other people. The populace of Tripolitza, apprised of our arrival, and expecting us last night, appeared to have been on the look-out ever since—at least, they were all assembled in the central square,—a fine-looking set of men, every one of whom was wearing the national dress, except the military and the demarch, who was clad in frock-coat and “go-to-meeting” hat—the official uniform of his kind.

He expresses deep regret at not having had the honour of entertaining us on the previous night, a sentiment wherein we fully participate. Neither can we stop for coffee and conversation (the Hellenic substitute for "tea and talk"), owing to the distance between this place and Megalopolis, which we are bound to reach to-night. So, with many polite speeches, we pass down the streets and out of the town, accompanied by the civil and military authorities, as well as the bulk of the citizens. At the outskirts there is a solemn leave-taking, and we shake hands with the demarch, the prefect of police, their respective myrmidons, and most of the principal burghers. After advancing some yards, we look back, and perceive the guide going through the same ceremony, evidently much to his satisfaction.

Arcadian
landscape.

The next few hours unfold all the hideousness of central Arcadia. True that on the north Mount Cyllene and other snow-capped peaks give a far distance which leaves nothing to be desired, and that the same may be said of Taygetus on the south: but unless the day be unusually clear, they are invisible; and in any case, there is no pleasing object in the foreground or middle distance on which the eye can rest. Clouds of dust on the road, marshy flats on either hand, shapeless hills without vegetation, no signs of life but the endless chorus of countless frogs; such is the central Arcadia of to-day—a bleak, unlovely table-land.

Leaving to the left the sites of Tegea and Pallanteum, and crossing the low ground, the road follows a long, steep

ascent, whose summit commands the wide undulating plain of Megalopolis. The bottom takes a considerable time to reach by means of a well-engineered and winding road. It is hardly needful to say that this is a Turkish work, and looks as if it had never been repaired since the expulsion of the Ottoman: yet so good is its construction, that it can still be used after half a century of neglect. During the descent we overtake cook and baggage, whom we fondly imagined to be an hour in advance. The whole party is looking helplessly at one of the horses, who has been seized with a rolling fit on the verge of the precipice, and although he has escaped destruction, has succeeded in squashing the luggage and bursting the bonds that secured it to his person. After some delay the mischief is repaired, and we pursue our way with the pleasing assurance that the satisfaction of hunger must be indefinitely postponed.

We providentially get down before the night has fully set in, and soon traverse the level country dividing the hills from the town. The cook's failure to make good use of his start imposes upon us the disagreeable necessity of seeking quarters in the dark. The demarch, of course, is "not at home," but a bystander points out the prefect of police in the street. He is immediately captured, and in self-defence guides us to the eparch's house. This official is young and a bachelor: he courteously takes us in, and we establish ourselves in the office, as being the only room large enough for the purpose. We then invite him to dinner, the invariable practice under such circum-

The Eparchate.

stances. He appreciates the unresined wine, but grows neither inquisitive nor communicative under its influence. The information that we are not "lovers of freedom" exhausts his interest in European politics; while his care for national affairs is confined to the acquittal of the late war-minister on a charge of peculation,—a result due, as he informs us, not to any lack of evidence against the accused, but to the reluctance of both parties to investigate these little matters. He expounds the nature of his office. The eparchy is a subdivision of the "nome," and both nomarchs and eparchs are appointed by the Government. He is therefore superior to the demarch—a mere local functionary elected in each "deme," or *commune*—a fact which he is not backward in impressing on our minds.

Megalopolis was different from the usual Hellenic city both in position and constitution. Founded in the fourth century B.C., when the art of fortification was thoroughly understood, it had no need of an acropolis, and stood well away from the hills, a very "city of the plain." Its huge circumference of about six miles contrasted strangely with the strait precincts of the ordinary town: indeed it was even larger than that of Sparta, who possessed no walls, boasting that her natural position and the valour of her citizens were all the fortification she required. This vast area was never fully peopled, and recalls Babylon or Nineveh, with their wide intramural corn-fields and pleasaunces, rather than anything Greek. Neither was Megalopolis the seat of a new sovereignty, inde-

pendent of the Arcadian communities: it was the centre of a federation into which these cities, to the number of forty, were induced to enter. To Epaminondas was due this conception and its execution. After breaking the power of Sparta on the field of Leuctra, he saw that the only method of permanently suppressing that great enemy of Thebes was the establishment of a rival power in the central Peloponnese. The "Great City" sprang up in three years, and received contingents of colonists from every place in the neighbourhood, except the more powerful Tegea and Mantinea; but these towns, though not included in the list, favoured the project by furnishing six out of the twelve *akists*, or founders. The ideal of the great Theban was perhaps not fully attained; for many of the inhabitants, obeying the indomitable tendencies of their race, drifted gradually back to their old homes. Nevertheless the newly established council and assembly continued to regulate the affairs of the union, and Megalopolis retained strength not only to resist successfully all the attacks of the Lacedæmonians, but also to prove a perpetual thorn in their side. Surprised at night and in time of truce by Cleomenes, tyrant of Sparta, it was burnt to the ground, a century and a half after its foundation. Rebuilt immediately, it rapidly and peacefully decayed, so that in Strabo's time it is humorously described as a "great desert;" and Pausanias compares it with Thebes or Nineveh, as a melancholy instance of vanished greatness.

Flat as are the immediate surroundings, there is something

very taking in the situation. Fertile fields clothe the banks of the Helisson, the river that ran through the centre of the town: and its westward course proves us to have crossed the watershed, and to be now in a land which finds drainage into the Ionian sea. The difference between to-day's scenery and that of yesterday is wonderful; it is a change from sterility and swamp to fruitfulness and running water. By
 The theatre. the river-side is the theatre, the largest in all Greece. Little of the masonry is visible; but grass, shrubs, and dwarf oaks turn the huge mass into a very pretty dingle, sloping gently down to the clear current beneath.

Crossing the Alpheus below its junction with the Helisson we wandered for three hours down its western bank, with Mount Lycaeus on our left hand. At Karytæna begins the true Arcadia—the land of crag and wood and torrent, home
 Karytæna. of Pan and the Dryads. Karytæna occupies the site of the ancient Brenthe, but possesses no Hellenic remains. It lies over the face and summit of a beetling crag; one side is separated by a deep gorge from another rock whereon stands a grand old Frankish tower, and the other overhangs the bed of the roaring Alpheus. This is that old-world district¹ believed by the inhabitants to be the cradle of the human race. On Lycaeus they asserted that Zeus was reared, and there stood his altar, where Lycaon its founder offered human sacrifice, and forthwith became a wolf (λύκος). Here

¹ Paus. viii. 1, 2, states that Pelasgus was born there. This is equivalent to claiming Arcadia as the birthplace of the aboriginal inhabitants of all Greece.

too were celebrated the Lycean games—the oldest that had a human origin—and here was the great temple of Pan. It is the country of the golden age, wherein gods walked with men as friends long before the growth of wealth and pride and wrong caused these manifestations to cease from off the earth. Such indeed is no more than the popular belief of every civilised and self-conscious age; although unhappily Science tends to prove it groundless by showing primitive man to have been in reality but a very wretched and unlovable creature. Nevertheless, in such a region, amid nature's beauties, unmarred by man's presence, it is permissible, if anywhere, to indulge in these day-dreams and look regretfully back on an imaginary past.

At an hour's distance from Karyatena the path strikes due westward, leaving the Alpheus valley, and plunging into the forests that cover the heights on that side. The scenery is now exactly suited to the genius of pastoral poetry—not very grand, but wild and varied. Glimpses of the river in its deep wooded bed, and of Mount Lycaeus clothed in oak and ilex, make charming pictures in their frames of green boughs: masses of dense thunder-cloud hang about, imparting effects of light and shade such as one usually associates with Scotland. Both colouring and form seem to carry us far away from Greece; and the presence of vegetation, with a consequently plentiful supply of water, helps the illusion by reminding us of the burns and becks of our own land. The trees are mainly oaks, but of three or four distinct kinds; and

Woodland
rambles.

the open glades are filled with arbutus, myrtle, cytisus, and other sweet-smelling shrubs.

Obstruction. Progress is necessarily slow, the road being formed of bare rock, and following the picturesque though scarcely convenient windings of the mountains. Once, in the open, we encountered a peasant with a long train of pack-beasts. A dead-lock appeared imminent, as there was no possibility of passing, and neither party seemed anxious to retreat: moreover, a sudden disagreement between one of our horses and one of the enemy's mules promised to land both those animals several hundred feet below the level whereon they then stood. Luckily, our escort came forward, and having succeeded in convincing the obstructionist that he was in the wrong, assisted him to retire backwards with his train into a spot sufficiently wide to admit of our passing. The mules of course displayed some obstinacy, and were only driven back at the point of the bayonet; but as the nature of the ground forced them to draw off with their faces to the enemy, no harm resulted from their recalcitrations to any one except themselves.

Andritsena. Distances are always understated, so of course the estimated four hours from Karytana had not even brought us in sight of Andritsena. But just as grave doubts were arising as to its existence, it burst upon us round a hill-corner. Its builder, like those of Arakhova and Karytana, seems to have chosen an inclination of 45° for his site, in order to exhibit his skill in setting up houses warranted not to slide into the

abyss below. Though apparently so close to the place when we first beheld it, there was a lot of work to do before reaching it—a long circuit of the valley to be accomplished, including a break-neck descent and a lung-exhausting climb. An even greater peculiarity than the steepness of its streets is their extreme narrowness, the roofs often approaching to within three feet of each other. Thus there is a notable absence both of sweetness and light. No one is sanguine enough to expect the former quality in a Greek town, but he may reasonably hope to find the latter.

Our house of entertainment was unusually clean, and actually contained some furniture of a rather curious and lumbering description; but the smallness of the apartment compelled us to stack it outside in the balcony, in order to make room for our beds. Luckily, it did not rain. Insects were shy—also a matter for congratulation.

Unwonted
cleanliness.

In the morning Messrs Cook and Co. depart for Tsakha, a little hamlet at three hours' distance, where we propose to spend the night after visiting Bassæ, which lies on the other or southern side of Andritsena. The ride is picturesque in the extreme, but most difficult. At first the track winds along the sides of precipitous ravines, and eventually disappears in sheer rock, so that the ascent has to be finished on foot. Of this nature is the access to the famous temple, whether one start from Andritsena or Phigalia; and to its situation we may attribute its preservation—for while no other building in the Morea has more than a few columns standing, we find here a

Bassæ.

Temple of
Apollo.

specimen of the best period of Greek architecture nearly externally complete. This noble monument speaks to us with perhaps greater eloquence than any other in the world. It is not the handiwork of the citizens of Athens, Thebes, or Argos: it does not bear witness to the wealth and power of any leading State, but of an almost unknown Arcadian town. So the splendour of Delphi or the luxury of Corinth are now most forcibly realised from a comparison with this temple, erected by the insignificant people of Phigalia as a thank-offering¹ when the

¹ Paus. viii. 41, 5. This is stated to be the same plague that ravaged Athens during the Peloponnesian war. Now Thucydides in his immortal description of its nature and effects expressly asserts that "it did not attack the Peloponnese in any degree worth mentioning." Yet that accurate historian would hardly have omitted to mention the fact if any town had suffered so greatly as to signalise the cessation of the pestilence by such a monument. Are we, then, to suppose the sufferings of Phigalia too slight to deserve mention? or to doubt the accuracy of Pausanias's belief? The latter's words are: "The name of Apollo 'the Helper' is due to the help given on the occasion of a pestilence; in like manner as he received the surname 'Averter of Evil' at Athens for having turned away the plague from that city also. My inference is based on the probability indicated by these double surnames, and on the fact that Ictinus, the architect of the temple at Phigalia, who lived in the age of Pericles, also constructed the temple at Athens called the Parthenon." Thus the negative evidence of the contemporary Thucydides is at least as strong as the conjecture of a writer nearly 600 years later.

Another explanation is suggested by the words of the former historian. In his account of the plague, after stating how it reminded the Athenians of the ancient oracle—

"A Dorian war shall come, and plague therewith"—

he proceeds to say, "Those who had heard it, also called to mind the answer given to the Lacedæmonians, when they asked the god whether they ought to go to war, that 'if they fought with might and main, victory should be theirs, and that he himself would help them.'" Now might not the help rendered to the Peloponnesian arms by the pestilence be what Phigalia wished to celebrate, and not its own deliverance therefrom? This suggestion appears less impossible

plague was stayed among them; and some idea of the resources of ancient Greece may be derived from remembering that it was in the midst of a universal and embittered war that this little-known community found means to carry out so great a work.

The names of Bassæ and Phigalia hardly occur in ancient literature. Pausanias briefly mentions the building as the finest of Peloponnesian temples after that of Tegea, and further informs us of the occasion of its construction, and that it was created by the genius of Ictinus, the architect of the Parthenon. Therefore, but for the accident of its preservation, the fact that this building, or even the city of Phigalia itself, ever existed, would be unknown save to a few curious antiquarians. Fortunately, the shrine of Apollo the Helper still stands, the most characteristic monument of that Hellenic civilisation whereof art was an essential quality, not merely an accident or appendage.

The situation is not intrinsically more admirable than that of other Greek buildings; it only seems so owing to the absence of modern life—that most obtrusive and disagreeable accessory. As we surmount a lofty crest, the “columns”—for so the natives call the temple—appear quite unexpectedly before us, and very striking is the scene. We stand upon the

if we call to mind that Apollo sends plagues as well as removes them, and that his thus smiting Athens is expressly characterised as “help” to Sparta and her allies. Did he not make the same answer to the prayer of Chryses, his outraged priest, and aid him in the recovery of his daughter by plaguing the Achaean host before Troy?

northern ridge of the hollow whence is derived the name of Βάσσαυ ("The Glens"), as well as that of the mountain Κοτέλιον ("The Cup"). The edge drops down to the south, disclosing the heights of Lycæus; while to the west it rises into a small peak, once graced with a shrine of Aphrodite. In the bottom of the hollow, out of sight of human habitation, stands the temple, set about with gnarled old oaks and Titanic rocks. The whole region exhibits the perfection of Arcadian landscape. The view from the ridge is bounded only by the distant wall of Taygetus. Yet this vast and varied panorama, in spite of its wildness and solitude, suggests nothing but peace, warmth, and plenty; and instantly the imagination is absorbed with undisturbed pictures of that far-away rustic life on which history is so silent, when flocks and herds ranged these hills and dales in company with the stag and wild boar—when man, simple but not barbarous, shared these groves and streams with creatures of his own imagination, with gods and nymphs and satyrs—or when, from their craggy home below, by the sounding falls of the Neda, long trains of Phigalian citizens toiled up the steep ascent to offer sacrifice and praise to Apollo the Healer, the Averter of Evils, who had helped them in their sorest need.

The edifice itself offers several architectural peculiarities. It is a peripteral hexastyle of the Doric order, with fifteen columns on each side. The material is a very close-grained blue-grey stone, quarried on the spot. Of the thirty-eight exterior columns, only three have fallen, and upon the greater



TEMPLE OF APOLLO, BASSAE.

part of their length the architrave is still lying. Thus the outer shell is nearly complete; but this well-preserved appearance is deceptive, the condition of the interior not answering to that of the peristyle. The walls of the building are nowhere more than three or four feet in height; neither does any one of the interior pillars retain its capital. The orientation differs from the otherwise invariable custom, the vestibules facing north and south, instead of east and west. Moreover, there is no platform of any kind, so the columns spring straight from their kindred rock; and thus, no doubt intentionally, is heightened the sense of abruptness produced in the spectator by the sudden appearance of a temple in that lonely spot. The cella also presents a unique construction, being lined on each side with five engaged columns of the Ionic order, which form a series of small recesses, resembling the side-chapels of a Roman Catholic church.

None of the frieze remains in its place, but, mixed up with the *débris* of cornice and walls, it strews the ground, waiting till skill and money shall be found to restore the scattered fragments to their place. Nothing is absent except the metopes of the frieze within the cella, which repose safely in the British Museum; and the reconstruction of the temple of Nike Apteros at Athens proves the possibility of carrying out the scheme. But trouble and expense are requisite; so it is scarcely to the native authorities that we can look for its inauguration, although the Hellenic Government does pride itself upon its care for ancient relics, and although we did

actually find a solitary workman busily employed in knocking a hole in one of the standing columns. Therefore, unless some foreign Power undertake the task, as Germany has undertaken the excavations at Olympia, we have small hope of seeing the temple at Bassæ resume its original appearance.

Sufferings of
the troops.

We manage to return to Andritsena in an hour and forty minutes, improving considerably upon our previous time. This is accomplished by sending on the horses before the conclusion of our mid-day meal,—a practice much to be recommended when the road is downhill, since the extreme steadiness of the animals under these circumstances by no means atones for their slowness; and the combination of these two qualities certainly does not here bear out the proverb about “winning the race.” At Andritsena there is some attempt to delay us while a change of soldiers is effected; and certainly the unfortunates who insisted upon taking part in the expedition to Bassæ look fairly exhausted with its fatigues. We constantly on such occasions exercised our minds with wondering whether the Greek soldier ever, under any circumstances, laid aside his greatecoat, for we never had autoptic evidence of his doing so. Inasmuch as even a matter so trilling as a change of escort seemed fenced about with multifarious formalities, we peremptorily declined to await the arrival of our new defenders; and flinging a drink-offering to the others, we rode off, but were afterwards distressed to find one of them toiling in our wake, not daring, apparently, to leave us altogether unprotected.

The road ran downhill, along paths shaded by beautiful evergreens, making us long for an extension of our very slender stock of botanical knowledge. The effect was often that of passing through the wilder grounds of a country-house at home ; and after coming in sight of the Alpheus valley, where the river, now swollen to considerable proportions, meanders between many-coloured banks of enormous depth, we felt that Greece is worth visiting for its natural beauty alone, and sadly reflected that, but for man's wantonness and indolence, the whole of its now arid surface might resemble Western Arcadia.

At the pretty little hamlet of Tsakha, we are taken into a Tsakha.
house, newly built indeed, but scarcely furnished with all the latest improvements ; for although the inevitable two rooms possess separate doors, they are separated only by a bamboo screen. Remembering this fact next morning, and feeling here that curious eyes were about our path, and about our bed, and spying out all our ways, through the interstices of the partition, we summon the guide, and charge him with horrid threats to keep guard within and protect us from unhallowed observation. But that wily individual, always fearful of offending the natives, and supposing that we should be none the wiser if our orders were disobeyed, quietly steps out to breathe the air, and leaves the family to its own devices. Accordingly, during the first splashings in the cold hill-water, one of us is aware of several eyes eagerly peering between the bamboos. A howl of execration, accompanied with a volley of missiles, momentarily clears the coast, and

produces the reappearance of our faithless attendant, trying his best to look as if he had not left the other room; whereupon he is given to understand in forcible language that there is a virtue called decency, unintelligible possibly to himself, but prized by the English mind, which we do not intend to have outraged with impunity: so for the next twenty minutes Mr Dragoman is kept patrolling up and down behind the partition, pondering, we hope, over the moral instruction just imparted.

CHAPTER XI.

OLYMPIA.

LEARNING that there is a ford below us known only to the men of Tsakha, we determine to shorten our journey by availing ourselves of it. Mine host agrees to act as guide, and takes us straight down to the river, through shrubberies even more variegated than those above the village. The passage demands minute local knowledge, and is threefold, crossing the Karytana or main stream of the Alpheus, and its tributaries the Phonia and Dunia just above their junction. After that point the river becomes unfordable. As it is, the water reaches the top of the girths, and a very serpentine course has to be taken to avoid the numerous holes in the bottom. Having all got over the first branch, with the exception of the military, who seem very loath to face the water, we are quietly proceeding over the narrow tongue of land dividing the two streams, when the guide pauses and is heard arguing earnestly with our dragoman. The upshot appears to be, that the former,

Fording the
Alpheus.

Native rascality.

although he has contracted to pilot us over for five drachmae, now finds he cannot do it for less than ten; otherwise he will be under the painful necessity of leaving us stuck fast between the Karytæna and the Phonia. Such is our dragoman's terror of the Greeks, that instead of asserting his rights, he begins abjectly to bargain and haggle with the rascal, until we discover the cause of the discussion, and promptly terminate it by promising to shoot the latter on the spot if he does not instantly proceed. We are at once taken safely across. Then the guide having received his five francs, promptly begs a *baksheesh*, probably supposing us ignorant of the full extent of his iniquities, interpretation having been employed throughout the recent transactions. Of course we decline, and on receiving that answer he gives vent to much spleen, addressing many impolite remarks to the leader of our forces. "Descendant of an abandoned great-grandmother," says he, "it is you who are dissuading the lords from giving *baksheesh*." This accusation our man indignantly repudiates, and tells him "he's another;" whereupon the other gentleman calls him an "accursed liar," and vows to murder him next time he comes this way.

The exchange of these little mutual compliments is interrupted by a message from the soldiers, brought over by the hindmost driver, and requesting us to release them in writing. Their orders were to conduct us across the Alpheus: so, although they can see us safely on the other side, they are bound to wade over and back again unless we certify that we

do not require it. This course seems to us slightly unnecessary; but knowing the unyielding nature of foreign ideas as to discipline, we concoct a splendid testimonial, setting forth that we have crossed the Alpheus in perfect security, and have been efficiently guarded by the valiant heroes to whose hands we consign these presents, and that they are discharged on the southern bank of the river at our own special desire.

The third river is at some little distance from the other two, and though smaller, is scarcely less difficult to negotiate, owing to the immense depth of its banks. The party disperses in order to seek a descent; and by the time a practicable spot is discovered, two of the drivers have disappeared, so that much ingenuity is required to get the baggage-horses down, and still more to induce them to take to the water. Indeed the sagacious animals, accustomed to move only in Indian file—a mode of procedure rendered impossible by the break-neck character of the bank—and deprived of their drivers, turn absolutely unamenable, and either remain doggedly on the height above, or wander aimlessly up and down the current. The faithful Anastasius performs prodigies of activity to get them back into the right way. At last they are all collected on the farther side, where we find our truants comfortably sitting down just out of sight, and declaring that they had lost us, and thought it best to wait there till we had got across. Righteous indignation overflows, and we tell the dragoman to impart to them our sentiments, which is done something as follows:—

Dispersion of
the expedi-
tion.

Travellers. "Ask them what the —— they mean by sneaking over like that, and leaving their brutes to run wild about the country."

Dragoman. "The gentlemen beg to be informed why you forgot your unreasonables." (*N.B.*—For some occult reason the modern Greek calls his horse τὸ ἄλογον, the "unreasoning one"—i.e., the "brute" *par excellence*.)

Drivers excitedly explain that the "unreasonables" ran away from them (which is about as true as to say that a railway station ran away from a train).

Travellers. "Just say we've a good mind to break these sticks over their backs, and to fine them half their pay, and that if they do anything of the kind again, we certainly shall."

Dragoman. "The gentlemen are not pleased with your conduct, and will be less pleased each time that you repeat it."

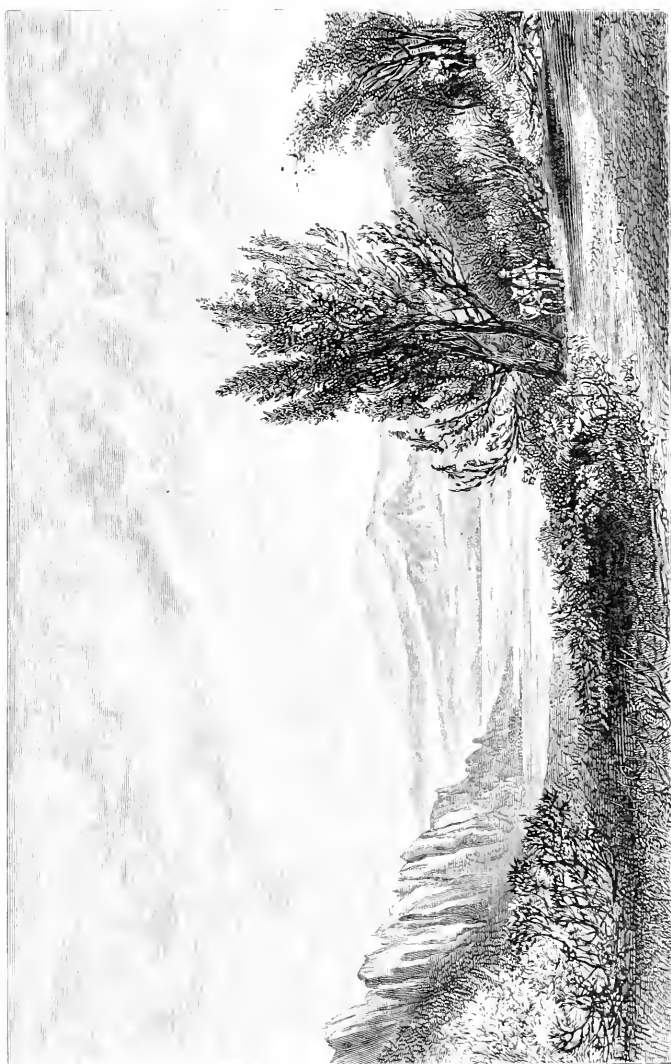
Finding it hopeless to try to communicate our true sentiments through such a medium, we lay aside our habitual reserve and address a few observations to the men directly.

Valley of the
Alpheus.

After this episode, we proceed pleasantly onwards down the right bank of the river, over low sandy hills covered with vegetation of every size and colour—dark pines blending with the light green of the shrubs, and set off here and there by a Judas-tree in the deep pink of its full bloom. Even the rain and mist fail to destroy the soft beauty of this valley, so unlike the majestic but arid glories of the north and east.

Olympia.

At about five o'clock, rounding a turn in the road, we suddenly found ourselves in the rear of a considerable assem-



VALLEY OF THE ALPHEUS.

blage, consisting of the entire population of Olympia, headed by their eparch. Our arrival lost some of its dignity, owing to that gentleman's very reasonable expectation that we should choose the lower road, which was considerably shorter than the one we had taken, and also offered the great advantage of passing the water by a bridge. But then the guide had never been over it, and was therefore wholly incapable of realising its existence; and our landlord at Tsakha was of course unlikely to mention it when he saw his chance of leading us over the ford, and thereby extorting a profit. The eparch had therefore sent troops to the bridge to bring us up in state, and was looking out for us in quite another direction. He was a little disappointed, but still had the satisfaction of leading us in triumph round the base of Mount Kronion into the "Altis," or sacred precincts, where the excavations were going on.

Arrived in this wondrous spot, where the liberality and disinterested enthusiasm of a foreign Government had just reopened a closed book and restored to light the long-hidden headquarters of the most peculiar and characteristic institution of Hellenic life, we naturally desire to dispense with formality, and at once establish a rough acquaintance with the newly uncovered ruins. But the eparch and Co. courteously insist upon accompanying us in our wanderings, and prove an insuperable obstacle to our using guide-books, and otherwise prosecuting researches on our own account, while they turn out to be splendidly ignorant even of the names of

the various buildings. The best-informed of the party points out the temple of Zeus Olympius—he is quite sure about that, but further he has not troubled to inquire. As it is Sunday, the Germans are all absent and the museum closed. So after satisfying ourselves as to the relative position of the principal edifices, we retire to the little hamlet high up on a neighbouring hill, where a small *khani* has a room to let of the very snug dimensions, and enlivened half the night by the conversation and songs of the carousers in the shop below.

The excavations.

Next morning we visit the excavations, now going merrily on after the Sunday's rest. The workmen are Greeks, but superintended by German foremen. The gentleman in charge of the museum and works does us the honours most courteously and efficiently: his thorough antiquarian knowledge, and the admirable method with which each article is numbered and ticketed so soon as discovered, make the lionisation a pleasure rather than a duty. All this is a vast improvement upon the haphazard, superficial manner in which the Greek Government conducts its researches; and very pleasant is the discovery of this oasis of education after many days' journey through a desert of barbarism and ignorance—even greater than the pleasure wherewith we originally laid aside the trammels of European life and entered upon our pilgrimage. With an excellent plan of the works to refer to; and the assistance of the German *savant*, we easily make out the various parts of the Altis. It unfortunately happens



OLYMPIA.

that the contract between the two Governments terminates this year (1881), and there is much fear that the operations may come to an untimely end ; but even at the worst, a great undertaking will have been satisfactorily carried out, the principal buildings having been uncovered, and with them objects of art sufficient to add very materially to our existing knowledge.

The Olympic games were at once the oldest and the most important of these eminently Greek assemblies—the one tie that, along with community of speech and community of religion, bound together the Hellenic race, so incapable in political matters of union and co-operation. While the other periodic festivals, however ancient, claimed only a human origin, the Olympia boasted an initiation at the hands of Kronos, the father of the gods. But their exact source is obscured by various legends ; and the first official Olympiad, whence the Hellenes dated their years, as Christians from the birth of Christ, Romans from the founding of the city, or Mahometans from the Hegira, only goes back to the respectable antiquity of 776 B.C. But long before that date the Alpheus' banks were the scene of athletic competitions ; and confused tales relate how gods and demigods instituted or took part in such contests.

The place is called the “colony of Lydian Pelops,” and the first Olympic ode of Pindar narrates how that hero, beloved of Poseidon, and carried off in childhood to the house of Zeus, was sent down to earth again “in the flower of his age, when

The Olympic games.

Their origin.

the down first covered and darkened his chin," and how he resolved to win to wife Hippodamia, daughter of Œnomaus, the Pisan king; how by the foaming sea he prayed to the "loud-thundering lord of the mighty trident" to give him victory in the chariot-race with her sire, on which condition alone could his suit be successful; how, knowing that thirteen suitors had already failed in the trial, and suffered death as the penalty, he pronounced that doom better than a long inglorious old age; how the God of ocean heard his prayer, and gave him a golden chariot and steeds of immortal race, whereby "he overcame the might of Œnomaus, and won the maiden for his bride."¹ "And now by Alpheus' stream he shares in glorious funeral-rites, laid in a tomb whereunto all men resort, beside an altar highly honoured of strangers. And the fame of Pelops shines afar in the races of the Olympic feasts, where the prize of swiftness is contested and pre-eminence of strength with mighty toil."

Besides the Asiatic kings who ruled the land from Argos to Pisa and gave it its name—"island of Pelops"—Heracles is intimately associated with the Olympia.² Pindar in another ode speaks of the "contest founded by the mighty Heracles beside the ancient tomb of Pelops," after he had conquered the country and destroyed the Epei, with their lawless and bloodthirsty chief. Then "Zeus' valiant son, collecting in Pisa all his host and booty, measured out a parcel of ground to be sacred to his great father; and having built a fence

¹ Pind. Ol. i. 146.

² Pind. Ol. x. 30.

about the Altis, he marked it out in a clear treeless space, and made the plain all round a place of feasting, and honoured Alpheus' flood, along with the twelve supreme gods. And the hill he called after Kronos' name; for before, when Enomaus reigned, the snow-crowned hill was nameless."

"But no trees grew in the glades of Zeus-born Pelops; and without them, the plot was felt to suffer from the sun's burning rays."¹ So after the first celebration, "his heart stirred him to travel once more to the Istrian country," whither he had before gone to fetch the golden-horned doe—a land "beyond the cold blast of the North Wind," full of marvellous trees, some of which he now longed to plant around the race-course. So he journeyed again to that hyperborean land, and begged of the gentle people there dwelling an olive-shoot, to give shade to the sacred enclosure, and crowns for the victors.

Legend of the
sacred olive.

How highly esteemed was this simple meed, may be judged by a glance at any one of those magnificent odes of victory which have survived to our time. The conqueror, whether he be a Sicilian monarch in the four-horsed chariot-race, or a humble youth in the boys' wrestling-match, is treated as having reached the summit of earthly distinction: the lustre of his success is reflected upon his native town, and his righteous exultation is only to be checked by the ever-present fear lest too much prosperity unaccompanied by due humility shall call down a "Nemesis" from the jealous gods.

Tradition preserves the names of the victors in that first

¹ Pind. Ol. iii. 20.

The various
competitions.

contest : foot-race, wrestling, boxing, chariot-race, hurling the javelin and the discus, being all mentioned.¹ But the poet is really describing the scenes of his own day in speaking of all these competitions, and how at their conclusion, "far into the evening gleamed the lovely light of the broad moon, and the whole sanctuary resounded with joyful songs, after the fashion wherein victory is celebrated." In primitive ages there was but one contest, the foot-race; and since the victory of Corcebus in 776 B.C., a full record was kept of successful names. Fresh "events" were constantly added, up to the institution of a *pancratium* for boys in 300 B.C.,—the same year in which the original number of Hellanodikæ, or chief judges of the games, was finally restored. Thus at last there must have been much to see, and the festival was strangely altered from the primeval simplicity of Corcebus's day. Besides the original foot-race, there was the *diakulos*, or race "there and back"—two lengths of the stadium instead of one; the *pentathlon*, or combination of running, leaping, boxing, wrestling, and javelin-throwing, all of which the same individual had to win in order to be proclaimed victor; the boxing-match; four-horsed chariot-race; *pancratium*, or combination of boxing and wrestling; combination of running and wrestling; boys' boxing-match; race of soldiers in heavy armour; single-horse race; pair-horse race; races of four, two, and single colts, and the *pancratium* for boys.

As the meeting increased in variety and importance, so

¹ Pind. Ol. x. 73.

did the material aspect of the Altis and its surroundings. Within the sacred precincts sprang up temples, statues, and altars, till the mere catalogue appals the reader. Gods and heroes, victors in the games, kings and Roman emperors, peopled in effigy that splendid enclosure. Altars to all the deities under their various attributes smoked with countless sacrifices. Shrines of every shape and size exemplified the noblest products of art. Even without the Altis were altars and temples—as on the top of Kronion, where offering was made to the sire of Zeus. Around, too, were gymnasia, baths, treasure-houses, the town-hall of the Eleans, quarters for the officials, and lodgings for the vast mass of general spectators, who thronged thither every four years from Africa, from Asia, from Italy, from the islands, and all parts of continental Greece itself. But not only at the Olympiads was the place frequented; there would at all times be a constant stream of worshippers to the various shrines and to the oracle of Zeus, of athletes training in the gymnasium, of Elean councillors and of tourists anxious to visit this great centre of religion and art.

Pillaged by Roman and Byzantine, pagan and Christian, the place became a desert, and the floods of Alpheus bursting the unrepaired dikes, overwhelmed its ruins. But the German Government has laboriously laid bare the site, and archaeology has reaped benefits even greater than were anticipated. Beginning at the temple of Zeus—the only building that before the commencement of this undertaking could be with cer-

The Altis.

Temple of
Olympian
Zeus.

tainty identified—the works have extended over the greater part of the Altis. This enclosure was bounded on the west by the river Cladeus, on the north by Mount Kronion, on the east by a low hill, and on the south by the Alpheus, embankments being employed on this side to supplement the fence that elsewhere marked off the hallowed ground. The processions entered by the great gate on the bank of the Cladeus; hard by was the sacred olive-tree whence the victors' crowns were cut. Passing by the *gymnasion* and *heroon* of Pelops, we find the whole basement of the principal temple clear and complete, paved with tiles of white marble, according to the description of Pausanias.¹ It was built by Libon, a native architect: its height to the cornice was 62 feet, the breadth 95, and the length 230; so that for size it ranked amongst the greatest of Hellenic buildings. Indeed it was regarded as a worthy rival of the Parthenon; although the pumice-stone of the district, of which it is constructed, in our eyes contrasts unfavourably with the more magnificent material of the *chef d'œuvre* of the Acropolis. The columns are all overthrown, yet we are able, from the numerous drums that lie about, to reconstruct the building in exact accord with the account of Pausanias. Moreover, his accurate record of the sculptures on either front permits us to explain and identify the fragments brought to light at this spot. The eastern pediment was the work of Peonius, a Thracian, representing the preparations for that primeval chariot-race between Pelops and

¹ Paus. v. 10, 2.

Ænomaus. Zeus occupies the middle place; on his right are Ænomaus, Myrtilus, his charioteer, and four horses; on his left Hippodamia and Pelops, also with his driver and horses. At the respective ends are the river-gods Cladeus and Alpheus, in accordance with the Greek custom of typifying scenery by a personification of the chief natural objects of the neighbourhood. The western pediment, attributed to Alcamenes, illustrated the famous broil between the Lapithæ and Centaurs. Pirithous is the central figure, with Caineus and Theseus, resisting the assaults of his half-human guests, who are in the act of carrying off the youths and maidens of the Lapithæ. Considerable portions of both subjects are now to be seen at Olympia: they are in extremely high relief, scarcely seeming a part of the slabs to which they belong. The workmanship of the opisthodome group fully raises Alcamenes to the rank assigned to him by Pausanias,—“the second sculptor of his age.” The almost perfect figure of a wife of one of the Lapithæ, on whose person are discernible the now mutilated hands of a sacrilegious Centaur, is as good a bit, both in design and execution, as one could wish to see. The metopes, illustrating the labours of Heracles, were discovered at an earlier time, and transferred to the Louvre at Paris.

To the north is the curiously shaped *heroon*, or shrine, The Pelopion. of Pelops, who at Olympia was honoured as highly above all other heroes as was Zeus above all other gods. The building occupied a *temenos*, or sacred plot, planted with trees,

running parallel to half the length of the great temple, and consecrated by Heracles to the shade of his great ancestor. The body of that king had a curious history. An oracle having foretold that Troy could only be captured after bringing to the spot the bow of Heracles and the bones of Pelops, the Achaean host sent to Lemnos to procure the first, and to Pisa for the second. Both arrived, and in due course the city was taken. Among the many perils encompassing the returning Greeks was a storm off the Euboean coast, which sunk the vessel that bore the precious corpse. Years afterwards an Eretrian fisherman drew up a skeleton of more than human size, and, ignorant of its sacred nature, gave it burial in the sand, till he could find opportunity to visit Delphi and ask the import of his discovery. There, by a fortunate coincidence, were present Elean envoys seeking some cure for a sore pestilence then ravaging their land. The oracle revealed that the bones were those of Pelops, and bade the finder restore them to the Eleans, which he accordingly did: the plague ceased, and he and his descendants for ever were appointed guardians of the skeleton. Much sacrifice was offered to Pelops' shade, with many curious observances—black rams being the only victims, and the wood of the white poplar the only fuel. Those, too, who had tasted of these victims, were not allowed without due purification to enter the house of Zeus—in order, presumably, to mark the great gulf fixed, even in Hellenic mythology, between the denizens of hell below and heaven above.

Beyond this building is the temple of Hera, a Doric edifice The Heræum. by an unknown architect. As dedicated to the queen of heaven, it boasted the same supremacy in female as did the temple of Zeus in male worship. Its affairs were managed by a board of sixteen women, who every four years wove the *peplus* or sacred cloak, and superintended the maidens' races. The distance was five-sixths of the ordinary course; and there were three contests, for competitors of various ages. That of the eldest virgins, who ran last, is not indicated; but probably each determined for herself the proper time of life at which to give up athletics, just as the analogous question of ball-going is in our time left to the circumstances and discretion of the young lady herself.

These sports were referred back to an origin as remote as the masculine, their institution being assigned to Hippodamia, in celebration of her marriage. The profane gaze of man was doubtless sternly excluded from the performance, just as during the regular Olympic festival it was death for any woman to be discovered within the railing of the Altis.

Midway between the Heræum and shrine of Pelops stood Altar of Olympian Zeus. the great Altar of Olympian Zeus, now entirely gone, for the excellent reason that it was wholly composed of the ashes of animals offered in sacrifice. These charred remains were kneaded into clay with water from the Alpheus, and of blocks thus formed was built an altar 22 feet in height, standing on a circular base (*πρόθυσος*) 120 feet in circumference.

To the right of the Heræum is the Exedra, a crescent- The Exedra.

shaped building, where men sat and talked ; and beyond it the Metroum, a large Doric temple sacred to the mother of the gods. Going back towards the great gate, we find a circular erection called the Philippeum, or shrine of Philip of Macedon, a brick edifice once surrounded with columns, built to celebrate the subjugation of free Hellas in the battle of Chaeronea. There lay Philip himself, his father Amyntas, and Alexander his son.

Art discoveries.

Of the innumerable altars, statues, and works of art that once crowded these shrines, comparatively few have survived, at least so as to be capable of identification. Foreign spoilers carried away everything that by the value of its material offered temptation to their greed—such as the Phidian statue of Zeus, wrought in gold and ivory, accounted one of the seven wonders of the world. Amongst the more famous discoveries is the base of the great Altar of Victory, recognised beyond all doubt by the draped effigy of the goddess dug up at its side. Her face is unfortunately wanting ; but in spite of this disfigurement, the grace of her figure, and the lifelike poise of the limbs spread out in flight, combine to create one of the first specimens of plastic art. Still more famous is the beautiful Hermes, the undoubted product of no less a chisel than that of Praxiteles himself, if we may judge from the spot where it was discovered. Already numerous casts have familiarised Europe with the almost faultless head and bust ; and the identification has lately been rendered all but certain through the discovery of the miniature figure of the infant

Dionysus, which the larger figure is known to have supported on its arm. On the west of the Altis is the gymnasium, with its polished floor and remains of graceful colonnades; and near it a picturesque ruined church built out of fragments of the wrought masonry, with which the neighbourhood abounded. To the south the council-house has been laid bare, and to the east the baths; while further north on the same side is the entrance to the stadium, spanned by a bridge. The race-course itself has still to be cleared, as well as the hippodrome. If this is ever accomplished, the Altis will be practically uncovered. The works might even with advantage be extended beyond those limits, for we know that all round were lodging-houses and other kinds of buildings, which, even if architecturally uninteresting, might contain many objects of value.

All portable discoveries are at once removed to two little The museums. sheds close by, styled grandiloquently the Museums. The Greek Government has driven a hard bargain with the German, stipulating that everything is to be left in the country, except in the case of undoubted duplicates, when the less perfect specimen may be taken away. But a further difficulty arises in consequence of the absurd obstinacy of the "deme" of Olympia in asserting its municipal rights, and declining to let anything be removed from the spot; so that all these marbles and bronzes, instead of being studied at Berlin or even at Athens, waste their sweetness on literally desert air, and can only be known to the general public through the

medium of casts and photographs: since a collection of ten cottages, containing one spare room between them, which is all the place can boast, can hardly be considered accommodation sufficient for any great number of archaeologists.

About 12,000 bronzes have been dug up, of apparently the most diverse dates. Among the best are a dedicatory *discus*, the offering of some grateful champion, in excellent preservation; and two beautiful reliefs, worn very thin, but skilfully fixed upon plaster, the one representing Heracles shooting, the other a series of designs, including eagles, gryphons, Heracles, and the Asiatic Artemis. In the sculpture-shed, it must be owned that there is a great deal of very second-rate work, a large proportion consisting of the statues of Romans, and falling below rather than above mediocrity. But the Hermes, Victory, and pedimental decorations amply repay all the trouble of a visit. There are also some excellent fragments, and a very perfect statue of a Roman lady.

The above is but an extremely rough sketch of the great work just accomplished by an enlightened foreign Power on Hellenic soil. The richness of the vein here struck gives good hope that similar enterprises might be elsewhere undertaken with great, though probably not equal, success.

The troubles that have passed over this unhappy land, added to the worthlessness of its inhabitants, have destroyed the outward traces of its old civilisation. But though its

temples cannot rise again from their graves, it has been proved possible to bring to light their bones, and find out how they stood and looked when the wretched villages, that are now their only tombstones, were flourishing cities, foremost in the race of culture throughout the world.

CHAPTER XII.

PYRGOS AND ZANTE.

WE left Olympia in sorrow and an open carriage, for there is a tolerable road from the sea up to this point, though no farther. Here, therefore, as in the Argive plain, improved cultivation is the manifest result. Magnificent oranges, as large as melons, were not the least agreeable of the products of a roadside farm, abounding also in raisins and figs. Only the lemon crop, usually no less excellent, had all perished from the fearful cold of the past winter. Strange indeed was the idea of frost and snow amid those fields teeming with life and rich with the promise of harvest. The huge green lizard darting across the road, the waving corn already in the ear, the reawakened snake basking in the sunshine, the tender vine-leaves newly opened—all spoke of warmth and light and fruitfulness. Alas that such expectations should be too often falsified, and that a Greek spring should be no less treacherous than our own, liable at any moment to be

swept by a wave of winter as sudden and destructive as the storms of the surrounding seas!

The little town of Pyrgos (The Fort) is eminently modern Pyrgos, and uninteresting, and consequently one of the most flourishing in Greece. Hellenic progressiveness was here illustrated by the discovery that the whole place, although a considerable emporium, did not contain a single bottle of unresined wine. A visit to the eparch entailed coffee and palaver—a trial demanding considerable fortitude, owing to the forcible manner in which the worthy gentleman's house recalled the immediate neighbourhood of the Cloaca Maxima. Subsequently learning our desire to purchase a few Greek knives and fezzes, the pre- Shopping in
fect of police volunteered to accompany us in our quest. The
state.
The population flocked to assist at the negotiations, which were therefore conducted under the gaze of a vast procession that gravitated up and down the main street according to each change in the centre of attraction. The method of transacting business was simple in the extreme. The tradesman would observe, "These silk tassels are worth 12 drachmæ apiece." The prefect would say, with decision, "Give him 8," and would then order him to put up as many as might be required, the other complying without the smallest hesitation or show of annoyance. Among the crowd was an interesting specimen—a native who talked the most idiomatic nautical English, and insisted upon airing this accomplishment before his admiring countrymen. His catechism at last became rather too inquisitorial, and showed him to possess some knowledge of English

life, since he refused to accept our now stereotyped statement that we lived in London, and declaring that English gentlemen always had homes in the country, demanded detailed accounts of the climate, products, and physical characteristics of those counties to which we happened respectively to belong.

Katakolo.

A short drive brings the homeward-bound tourist from Pyrgos to its little port Katakolo, standing at the extremity of a promontory of the same name. A few boats and houses compose the entire town and shipping: a steamer is a very rare occurrence at this benighted spot. On our arrival we found a north-west gale blowing steadily, so that for the present there was no chance of proceeding on our way to Zante; but having forty hours in which to catch the Austrian Lloyd's boat at that island, we experienced no uneasiness at the delay. During dinner in one of the bare rooms of the inn, our drivers requested a farewell interview. They seemed genuinely sorry to leave us, and had, on the whole, behaved well throughout our travels in the Peloponnese. The contrast was striking between these men and the northern Greeks. According to their lights they were civil and obliging, and unfeignedly thankful for kindness; whereas politeness, activity, or gratitude seemed absolutely non-existent amongst the corresponding class in Phocis and Beotia.

Next morning the wind continued contrary, and a visit to our *caïque* proved by no means reassuring. The skipper gave voluble accounts of the rapid runs he had made to Zante—in three hours with a fair wind, and so on; also

expatiating upon the beauties of his boat — to our eyes a very ordinary specimen of its own highly incommodious class ; until we were at length compelled to explain that no former triumphs of navigation would console us for our enforced delay at the present moment.

The interest of Katakolo was soon exhausted. The uncarpeted, unpapered walls of the *khani* did not tend to raise our spirits. The *caïques* bore too strong a family likeness to each other to admit of long inspection. Moreover, in spite of its smallness, the place was as unsavoury as any other town of that country. So the day was spent among the cytusus upon the bleak cliffs above the town, watching with longing eyes the misty outline of Zante across the foaming sea. Bed-time arrived without a change of weather, but strict orders were given for an immediate start in the event of one of those sudden variations so common in that fickle region. At about 3 A.M., when exhaustion had at length produced a temporary oblivion of the exquisite discomfort of the native bedsteads, information arrived that the wind had shifted round to the east. Hastening down to the beach, we rowed alongside our plunging *caïque* ; but some delay occurred in waiting for an extra passenger, out of whom the skipper, having already let his boat to us at an extortionate rate, desired to make another honest penny. At last this gentleman arrived, a native of venerable age, whom severe ophthalmia was taking to Zante in order to consult an oculist of high repute in that island. Disliking fresh air, he requested to be placed under hatches,

Pleasures of
a *caïque*.

and was consequently stowed away in the fore-cabin—a space of about two cubic yards capacity—where he remained snugly fastened down during the succeeding eight hours.

After rounding Katakolo Point with many tacks and much waste of time, we drove merrily westward over a sea still running high after the recent gale. A good spell of sleep ensued, under the comfortable belief that our future course was all plain sailing. Awakening, as too often happens, brought disillusion. The wind had fallen after two-thirds of the distance were passed, and our little craft lay off the island, tossing furiously but unprogressively. The hour of the steamer's arrival was now past, and we concluded that she had already touched and gone on; when, to our great joy, she appeared on the southern horizon, evidently, like ourselves, belated by the storm. Hope revived, only to fade away as our helplessness became revealed. Too small to carry a boat, but too large to be itself propelled by oars, the *caïque* is nicely calculated to combine and aggravate all the worst features of sea-travelling. The steamer crossed our bows within a quarter of a mile. Flags were waved from our mast-head and guns fired as signals of distress, but without obtaining the slightest recognition from the officer on her bridge, and she ran placidly on to her anchorage under the town. Even then a breath of wind might have saved us, but none came to our aid, and in another hour or so we had the satisfaction of seeing her slip from her moorings and glide gracefully away to the north.

The boat had by this time drifted under Mount Scopos, a tall ridge running round the southern part of the great bay, of which the farther side is fringed by the long straggling town and the castle-hill behind it. A light breeze sprang up, and took us gently across the beautiful expanse of water. The view is closed by the background of hills; but their slopes, clad with verdure, the clear white houses, and the busy harbour, make up in brightness and variety for anything that the picture may lack in extent. We proceed on shore in not the best of humours, having learnt that at least five days must elapse before the arrival of another boat, which feeling of annoyance our easy-going skipper seems quite unable to understand. We afterwards heard from friends who made the same dismal passage a few days later, that this gentleman boasted loudly of having taken us across in three hours—eight being the time really occupied—and that their incredulity was amply justified by their subsequent sufferings during an agonising passage of fourteen.

The cleanness and civilisation of Zante soon reconciled us *Zante*. to our enforced delay. The “National Hotel,” in the Place of the Poet, did indeed seem luxurious after recent experiences; and its accommodation, like that of Corfu, serves to illustrate the tenacity of English habits and influence. Everything was done to mitigate the lot of the castaways, to whom, like to St Paul, the “foreign people showed no little kindness.” While the much-needed luncheon was still under discussion, came a messenger with baskets full of roses and strawberries—a gift

from the oldest inhabitant of the place. This gentleman is well known to all who have touched at the island. At his present age of almost a century, he is one of those few survivors that recall the old order of things. An Englishman, he retains the keenest interest in the affairs of his native country, and criticises passing events with all the clearness of youth. Yet Zante has been his home ever since he acted as banker to Lord Byron in that island. Married to a native lady of large fortune, he spends the evening of his days in the land of his adoption, and does all in his power to promote the comfort of passing travellers. He at once placed at our disposal his villas, to the number of five, in various parts of the island—an offer which proved invaluable in that soft do-nothing climate.

For invalids, Zante is even better than Corfu. It lacks the fine scenery and facilities for sport afforded by the latter, but it can boast a still warmer and more equable climate, and still greater quiet and seclusion. Corfu is a small country, Zante a large garden. Mounting the castle-hill, the spectator overlooks the great central plain of the island, enclosed between Mount Scopos and the ridge whereon he stands on the south, and a line of lower hills to the north. The space between is covered with vineyards and corn-fields, olive-groves and orange-trees, and thickly studded with the tiniest villas. Every Zantiote has his country-house, whereunto he betakes himself during the summer months, and leads a life of voluptuous idleness, watching the ingathering of his various crops from

beneath the shade of his own vine and fig-tree. Hence the extraordinary number of these detached cottages, so different from the town itself, or the villages which nestle upon the sides of the farther range of hills. This semi-urban, semi-rural existence is the life *par excellence* of the Ionian isles; and readers of Homer will at once recall his description of the little farm in Ithaca, where Ulysses finds his aged father withdrawn from the bustle of the city, and where is fought the final fight between his little band of faithful followers and the angry relatives of the slaughtered chiefs.¹

The castle-hill offers another sad example of recent desolation. The Venetian walls, and the English buildings within, tell the modern history of the spot. The barracks are still in good repair, but empty, except that a few rooms have been converted into barns: not a tile or coat of paint has been added since our garrison marched out seventeen years ago. No single soul dwells within the circumvallation; grass has sprung up between the closely fitting stones of the racquet-court, till the whole has become a tangled mass of weeds; guns of various epochs, stuck upright in the ground, are wearing out an inglorious existence as gate-posts; and the St Mark's Lion does not look more a thing of the past than the still fresh English legends on the doors and walls. Picturesque as is the castle-hill, it yields the palm to Akroteri (the Promon- Akroteri. tory), the northern spur of its own ridge. Here, amid the olive-woods, are all the prettiest villas of the island, peeping

¹ Od. xxiv. 204, &c.

out through masses of flowers. The farthest point is occupied by a house and garden of our hospitable friend—the show-place of Zante. Everything is on a small scale, but so skillfully arranged as to produce no sense of confinement. There are terraces and arbours in a perfect wilderness of roses, verbenas, and scented geraniums; while oranges and strawberries can be had for the plucking. The outlook is seaward, towards the mountains of Cephalonia and the mainland. Anent this charming little domain we heard an instructive tale from a resident compatriot, illustrating how superficial is usually the knowledge of Greece possessed by her most ardent admirers. A certain historical writer, who during the Bulgarian agitation of 1876 sought notoriety by his uncompromising denunciations of Turkey, saw fit to visit the Hellenic kingdom shortly after. He seems to have confined himself to inspecting Athens and the principal ports, whereunto a grateful Government conveyed him in its own vessels. On his homeward way he touched at Zante, and interest was at once made to secure him a semi-triumphal reception at Akroteri. But the owner is said to have flatly declined to go out of his way to do honour to anti-English Englishmen, and neither went to receive him at his villa nor sent him thither in his carriage. On the other hand, he had no desire to be uncourteous or shut his place against any visitor anxious to see it. So the procession came off, but in a somewhat undignified manner, and its failure appears to have sharpened the always rather acrid humour of the guest. He consequently,



CEPHALONIA, FROM ZANTE.

on returning to the town, indulged the populace with a homily of extra ferocity, spoken in what he conceived to be Greek; although our informant was asked by an intelligent bystander whether "the gentleman was talking French or English." At any rate, he is understood to have concluded with a powerful peroration contrasting the glorious liberty of autonomous Greece with the ignoble slavery of down-trodden England. "You are heroes, and the sons of heroes, and you govern yourselves; we Englishmen are governed by a wretched Jew." After which patriotic observation he went on board his gun-boat and departed for Corfu, doubtless well satisfied that he knew Greece thoroughly, and possibly leaving behind a sense of astonishment in the minds of the natives of that country.

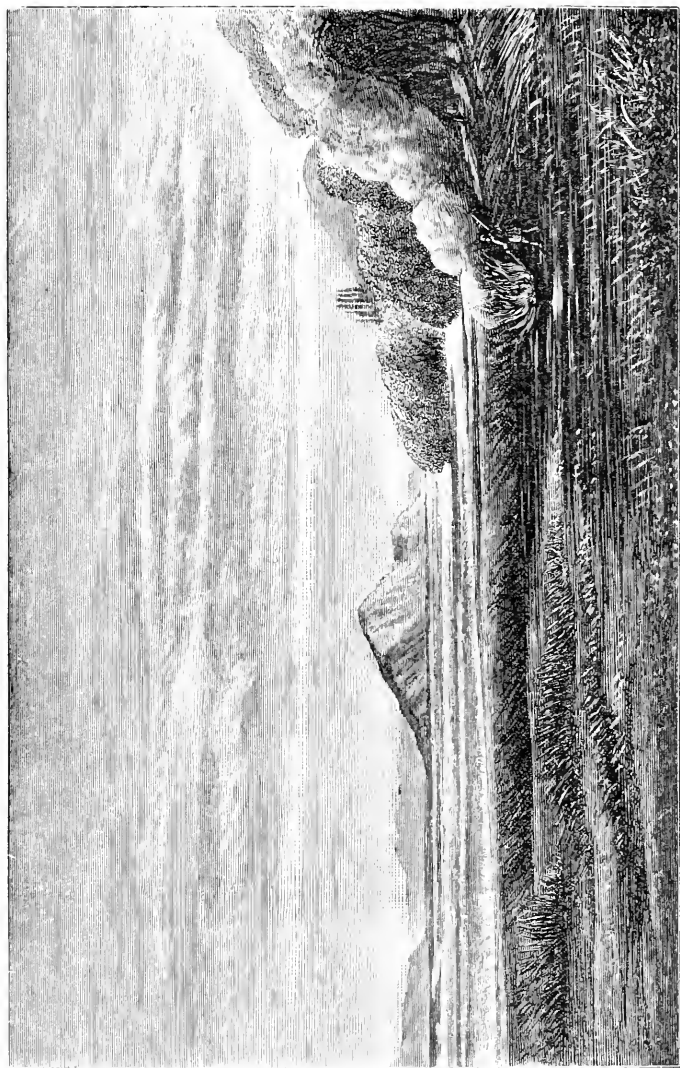
At Zante there is providentially little that it is indispensable to see. On the other hand, every nook and corner offers a charm of its own. Even the soaring spirit of the confirmed mountaineer has to content itself with a climb of 1300 feet up to the convent on Mount Scopos, the highest point in the island. The less energetic will learn with satisfaction that the entire ascent can be made on horseback, and will do well to avail themselves of that knowledge. The convent is picturesque, and the view an extension of that obtainable from the castle-hill. Mount Scopos was anciently known as Mount Elatos, or Pine Hill, illustrating the epithet "thickly wooded," which Homer connects inseparably with Zante. The fir-trees have disappeared long since, and all other natural

wood ; but the olives, figs, and oranges still justify the Homeric adjective.

The pitch-
wells.

But however aimless the traveller's wanderings, he has at least one sacred duty to perform—that is, to visit the pitch-wells, the one considerable lion of the place. These celebrated phenomena can be comfortably inspected in a short day's excursion from the town. The road runs for about nine miles, as far as Lithakia, across the great central plain. At that point we found another villa of our English friend—like all his others, ready seemingly at any moment for the accommodation of guests, and well stocked with fresh fruit, and native wine made on the estate. This excellent liquor is quite unlike the Zante wine usually sold in Greece or exported to England, which is much too sweet and heady to find favour with our countrymen. In the present case the sugar had been extracted, with the effect of producing a most excellent drink—the white resembling old natural sherry, and the red a very soft Burgundy.

A rough walk of one hour brought us to the little plain on the southern coast where the wells are situated, hard by the sea. They are two in number, but one is considerably larger than the other. An iridescent film covers water of the most transparent clearness. At a depth of about a foot is the pitch, its surface swollen by great bubbles that slowly grow and burst, sending up a murky liquid to join the film above. Between the two wells is a hole sunk some time ago in order to obtain petroleum ; but the yield did not suffice to pay expenses, and the



THE PITCH SPRINGS IN ZANTE.

works were abandoned. A light dropped into this cavity soon blazed up and produced a bonfire lasting some ten minutes, after which time the flames burnt themselves out. These pitch-springs are described by Herodotus,¹ in whose time they must have been larger and more important than in our own. He asserts them to have been several in number, of which the largest was 70 feet every way, with two fathoms of water above the bitumen—dimensions very greatly exceeding those of to-day. Moreover, he declares the sea to have been four *stadia*, or nearly half a mile, distant; it is certainly much nearer now. But these discrepancies may be disregarded if we consider that twenty-three centuries have passed since Herodotus wrote, and that Zante has undergone numerous and repeated shocks of earthquake in the interval.

The old historian also describes how the pitch was collected by thrusting green boughs down into it and then suffering the substance to drip off into vessels placed round the margin. A similar plan might easily be adopted at present. But the quality of this substance must have sadly deteriorated; for whereas Herodotus asserts it to have been more highly esteemed than any other Grecian pitch, not excepting the famous product of Pieria, it is now worthless, except for caulking the outsides of vessels, and even then can only be used after admixture with a certain proportion of vegetable pitch. But his most curious assertion concerning these wells is to the effect that substances thrown into them always reappear after a

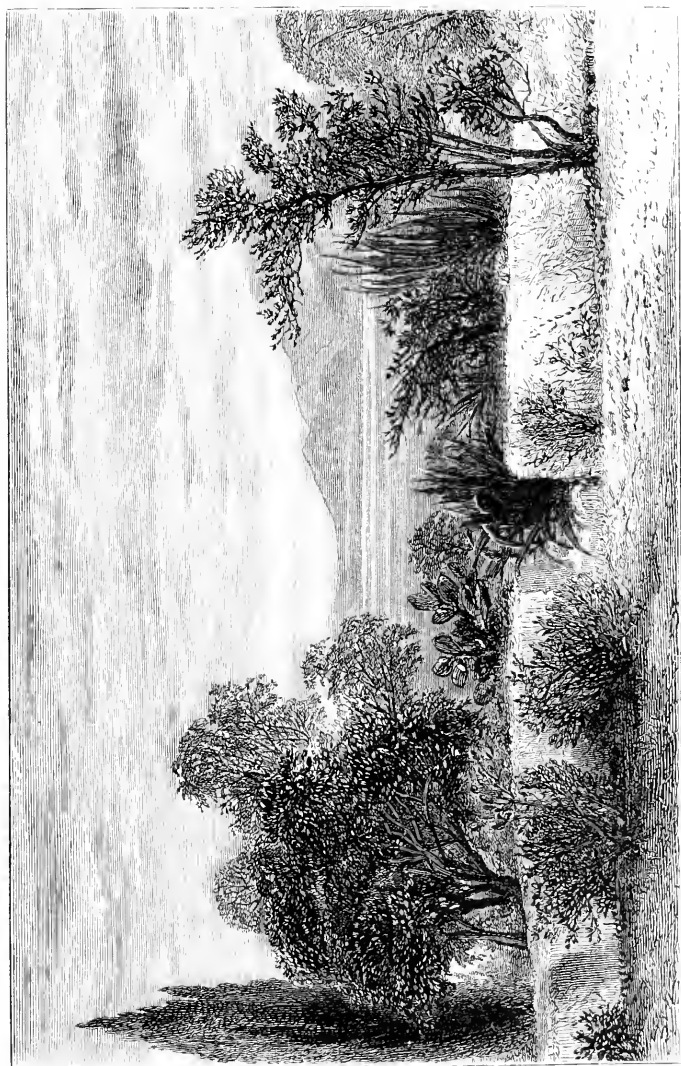
¹ Herod. iv. 195.

certain time in the sea. Although we failed to discover this belief among existing Zantiote traditions, we learnt that there is, off the other side of the island, a spot in the sea where a similar substance may be seen bubbling up from the bottom of the water. The presence of such a phenomenon goes far to corroborate the accuracy of the "father of history."

After walking round the little bay of Kieri, in which natural harbour a small schooner was at that moment lying, we returned by another route to Lithakia, and thence drove back to town, finding there some friends just arrived from the mainland. They seemed to have suffered unspeakable things at the hands of officious officialism. At Argos, for instance, instead of having quarters privately secured by their dragoman, they listened to the siren voice of politeness, and consented to be lodged in the barracks. There they had cause to remember sundry of the plagues of Egypt, and afforded a cheap gratification to the curiosity of the rank and file of the garrison, while all the time feeling that these enjoyments were causing no slight inconvenience to the gallant officers who had turned out of their quarters on their account.

Dove-shoot-
ing.

A single incident disturbed the even tenor of our life in this home of idleness. This was no less a matter than the arrival of a flight of doves on their way northward from Africa. Every one promptly quitted his work to pursue so choice a quarry. The sport perhaps is hardly great, the method adopted being to stand in ambush behind an olive-tree till one of the innocent birds perches within range of the



OUR LAST VIEW OF GREECE FROM ZANTE.

deadly flint-lock. Under these circumstances the olive-groves rapidly grew too hot to hold us; and our artist, after being driven from one post of vantage to another, abandoned his purpose, and ignominiously sought the shelter of garden-walls. To make matters worse, the birds in spring are old and in bad condition, so that they offered no gastronomic consolations for these perils. In autumn, during their southward passage, the young doves, then full-fed on ripe grapes, are esteemed, and doubtless rightly, a great delicacy. But to the Greek mind all feathered fowls are fair game, irrespective of times and seasons, and it is not unusual to see creatures so beautiful as hoopoes and golden aureoles ruthlessly exposed for sale in the market-place.

At length the arrival was announced of a steamer for Corfu — of course, at some abnormal hour. The ill-humour resulting from broken slumbers was not improved by the aspect of the vessel. She was even filthier and more crowded than the other Greek boats whereof we had had experience. The saloon literally did not give room to stow away our hand-baggage, which was trampled under foot by the mob on deck, until the advent of a smart shower caused it to be pitched unceremoniously into the hold. At the same moment there took place a rush below, and we had to choose between soaking or suffocation. There was meanwhile a swell sufficiently heavy to prostrate the weaker vessels among the passengers; added to all which, we suffered under the steward's old witticism of announcing dinner for a certain hour in the even-

Close packing

ing, and subsequently altering it to the middle of the afternoon.

Ithaca.

The voyage being by day, enabled us to get a glimpse of those Ionian islands which on the outward passage we had passed in the night. The rocky, barren Ithaca is just such as readers of the 'Odyssey' would imagine; and he must be indeed a sceptic who would refuse to accept this spot as the home of Ulysses. Of course, many of the Homeric notices are at variance with the actual facts, particularly the well-known account that it "lies far beyond all other lands in the deep;"¹ but against such arguments we have to set universal and unbroken tradition, as well as the consideration how admirably the general configuration of Thiaki corresponds to legendary description. The modern population is indeed ready to prove too much, not only identifying Mount Anogi with "Neritus of the waving foliage," and St Stephen's cave with the grotto of the nymphs, wherein the slumbering hero was laid by his Phæacian escort, but also pointing out to the more credulous the palace of Odysseus and the garden of Laertes.

Paxos.

About three hours from Corfu is the charming island of Paxos, with the neighbouring rock called Anti-Paxos. History says little of their past; but tradition asserts that off this peaceful coast, on the night of Christ's nativity, some mariners heard strange wailings, and a voice of loud lament that bade them go and say "the great god Pan was dead."

Corfu.

As the boat nears Corfu, some one points out the unusual

¹ Πανυπερτάτη εἰν ἄλλι κείται.

difficulty likely to be experienced in obtaining shelter. The whole of this enormous crowd must necessarily pass the night in the town, there being no means of proceeding until the following morning. It is consequently determined to tell off an advanced-party, with orders to row instantly ashore, and at any hazard secure rooms for ourselves and some friends who happen to be on board. The precaution proved most necessary, the hotels being already crowded with visitors—many, indeed, departing by the three boats that started next day, but none the less standing for that night between the new arrivals and their much-coveted repose. It was a heart-rending spectacle to see these unfortunates arrive one by one, vainly seeking hospitality. But Corfiote habits are accommodating, and the enterprising management of the St George Hotel succeeded eventually in procuring some sort of asylum for all applicants.

Daylight showed us Corfu as charming as before, with its cloudless sky, its verdure, and its light sea-breezes. Many friends were passing through, or breaking up their camp after a prolonged residence. We select the Italian steamer (Florio line) for Brindisi, and find her clean, but sadly overloaded with passengers. The only vacant sleeping-places are immediately above the screw, a position not well calculated to promote slumber. Indeed two English acquaintances betook themselves in disgust to the second-class berths, and having thrust their heads through the port-holes to avoid the atmosphere within, spent a pleasant night in this remarkable posi-

Italian
steamers.

tion. The result hardly justified their adventurous enterprise, for they did not leave those berths unaccompanied, and were obliged, after landing, to enter upon a course of entomological research, which only finished with our arrival at Naples.

At daybreak we reach Brindisi, and anchor ten yards off the quay, in the interests of the boatmen, who could extort nothing if we were moored alongside. But we have said farewell to Greece, and do not propose to enter upon a theme so trite as Italian experiences. Warmly thanking those who may have had the patience to accompany us through our rambles, and humbly hoping that our unvarnished tale may prove not altogether useless should they hereafter feel impelled to visit the "land of lost gods and godlike men," we bid them also adieu, having, like Horace, reached

"Brundisium longe finem chartaque viaque."

APPENDIX.

MEANS OF REACHING AND SEEING GREECE.

THE form of the foregoing narrative has precluded more than a passing reference to the important question of routes into Greece, and locomotion after arrival in that country. The intending traveller will probably be struck by the comparative inaccessibility of Athens; for while a journey of fifty hours brings him from London to Rome, he requires the best part of a week to arrive at the Piræus. This is the time occupied by the mail; so that at present there are no means of improving upon it, however skilfully the journey be varied.

Presuming, therefore, a desire to adopt one of the more direct routes, we find the following alternatives: Firstly, to embark at Marseilles, whence the Messageries Maritimes steamers start weekly for the Piræus, accomplishing the distance in five days. This plan has the advantage of simplicity, and the boats are well found and comfortable; but it presents the, to many people, serious drawback of a rather long sea-voyage. Nevertheless, for all but hopelessly bad sailors, it possesses the strongest recommendations. In any case, Athens cannot be reached without spending at least sixty-five hours at sea, before the end of which period most people "find their sea-legs" in ordinary weather. Thus all the discomforts of constantly changing trains and vessels are avoided, without as a rule entailing any additional suffering upon the passenger.

Secondly, the traveller may proceed to Naples, and there catch the vessels of the same line. The Messageries packets always touch at,

and others start from, that port—the latter being a consideration by no means to be overlooked by those who have regard for the position of their berths and other preliminaries of a journey by sea. The passage occupies three days, which, added to the sixty-four hours necessary for reaching Naples by land, gives a trifling superiority over the first route; while those who are not pressed for time will appreciate the advantages of passing through Florence, Rome, Naples, and Messina, and will probably avail themselves of this favourable opportunity for visiting the Hellenic remains of Paestum, Giurgenti, and Taormina, so invaluable to a student of Greek architecture.

Thirdly, follows the course described in the above pages—that of entering Greece by Brindisi and Corfu. Its superficial attractions are considerable: a single night suffices to land us in Hellenic territory, and we cross in the very fair vessels of the Austrian Lloyd or Florio Companies. But once arrived, we have only a choice of evils. The boat that brought us proceeds on the following day, but does not touch at the Piræus: passengers are dropped at Syra (about forty-two hours from Corfu), where, after waiting a whole day, they are picked up by another steamer and landed at their destination in some ten hours more, or after a total of nearly three days. To crown this shocking waste of time, there is a pleasing uncertainty as to the movements of the so-called “corresponding” steamer, which on very slight provocation will fail to put in an appearance. By discarding this plan, we reduce ourselves to travelling up the Gulf of Corinth in a Greek packet. This involves a delay of some days at Corfu. The distance between Corfu and Athens is accomplished nominally in forty-four hours; but the possible gain of time is a poor set-off against the certainty of discomfort on board, coupled with the likelihood of not being met at Kalamaki—a serious risk when it is remembered that that desolate spot is devoid of the very humblest accommodation. Moreover, native steamers should be employed as sparingly as possible. Therefore, until the establishment of some new and improved through communication, it is advisable not to approach Athens by way of the Isthmus. If, then, we are to choose between a straight passage from Marseilles or Naples, and an almost equally long series of short runs from Brindisi, involving changes of vessel

and other inconveniences, there will be a large balance of material advantage on the side of the former course.

The following table exhibits the comparative lengths of the four journeys just described. Only the time actually occupied on the railway and the steamer can be given, because the arrangements of the local services are subject to constant alteration, and the intervals of waiting at Corfu and Syra vary accordingly. Not the least among the advantages of the two direct routes (*i.e.*, from Marseilles or Naples to the Pireus), are freedom from any such uncertainty, and absence of delay at the port of embarkation, owing to the direct connection between the Messageries Maritimes and the through expresses.

N.B.—The time is calculated from London.

ROUTE.	Hours.		Total hours.
	Railroad.	Steamboat.	
1. Via Marseilles, . . .	27	120	147
2. „ Naples, . . .	64	72	136
3. „ Brindisi and Syra, . .	63	*65	128
4. „ Brindisi and the Gulf of Corinth, . . .	63	†57	120

* Not including the time spent at Corfu and Syra : boats are changed at the latter place.

† Not including the time spent at Corfu and Loutraki : boats are changed at both places.

But there is an even stronger reason in favour of entering Greece on its eastern side. It is an old remark that the Italian and Hellenic peninsulas stand back to back. To the west of the one lie its natural gateways, just as in the case of the other they lie to the east. History and legend attest roughly the truth of this observation. Æneas is forbidden to land on the shores of the Ionian gulf; neither was it over the short sea passage that the earliest Greek colonists found their way to that greater Greece which they established in southern Italy. The political connection of Greece with Rome gave to Brindisi and Durazzo only an artificial importance, destined to vanish after

the division of the empire, and prove the futility of acting against the indications of nature. If he follow these, the traveller passes straight from the famous remains of Hellenic civilisation in the west to the even more famous remains of its centre and capital, from all that is fairest in one peninsula to all that is fairest in the other. The Ionian Islands are charming, but there is something in their semi-Italian character intellectually unsatisfactory to those eager after Greece and her true associations: a restless impulse to push forward will preclude such persons from enjoying them as they deserve. But in the case of the homeward bound these objections do not apply. Satiated with sight-seeing, and somewhat tired with much journeying, one is then able to appreciate to the full their varied scenery, unrivalled climate, and teeming fertility. Their half-Eastern peculiarities make a gentle break in the return to Western life, curiously combined with a strong homelike feeling called up by the many remaining traces of the English occupation.

There are also practical considerations strongly in favour of proceeding directly to Athens. In no other town can the necessities for a protracted tour be so well obtained. Dragomans are indeed to be procured in Corfu; but there is a smaller assortment to select from, and there is no choice of men and beasts. Moreover, a short sojourn in the capital gives some insight into that strange psychological phenomenon, the Hellenic character, and enables those who know Greek to catch the accent, which is the main obstacle to understanding the modern language. These two acquisitions will be found most useful in the interior, as without them the traveller is absolutely at the mercy of his guide.

Persons desirous of seeing the country are practically reduced to one of two alternative modes of travelling—either by land in the manner described in the preceding pages, or by sea in their own yacht. It is true that native steamers touch at all the little ports; but Athens and Patras are the only towns on the mainland possessed of habitable inns, and Patras is not within easy reach of any place of special interest. Now as the other towns afford no kind of shelter, and as the boats only remain long enough to land and take in passengers, it follows that this method of locomotion is unavailable.

But those who possess a yacht can visit a majority of the most interesting spots without being obliged to sleep on shore. Olympia, for instance, may be reached by carriage from Katakolo in about four hours and a half. Tiryns is within thirty minutes of Nauplia, and the remainder of the road to Argos can be traversed in about forty-five more—Mycenæ lying at an hour and a half's distance beyond. Delphi is accessible from the Scala di Salona in a ride of two and a half hours; while from Chalcis to Thebes is a drive of about the same duration. Of course, certain expeditions involve an absence of two or three nights from the sea, and therefore all the paraphernalia of land-travelling are required: among such are trips to Livadia, Sparta, and Bassæ; but then, if these have to be abandoned, there is ample compensation in the power of visiting the islands in comfort—no easy matter without some sort of private vessel.

But as the majority of mankind have not this luxury at command, they must either give up the islands, or make what shift they can with the vile local steamers or viler sailing-vessels, and content themselves with traversing the mainland on beast-back in the regulation manner. To those about to embark upon a pilgrimage of this latter description, it is earnestly hoped that some hints may have been conveyed in the preceding pages. As before remarked, a life under canvas will greatly conduce to health and comfort, and the country will be seen to much greater advantage in the summer than at any other time. Should it be unfortunately necessary to make the tour earlier in the year, and therefore impossible to sleep in tents, then the following precautions are recommended:—

1. Whenever practicable, to send forward the baggage and kitchen to the village where it is intended to pass the night. The benefit of finding quarters prepared and food ready is almost indescribable. Long days in that exciting air are followed by considerable exhaustion, which is increased by the sudden fall in the temperature after sunset; so that the appetite can easily be overstayed—a not inconsiderable evil in that treacherous climate, which it requires the whole strength of the system to resist.

2. On no account to submit to being put up in a passage room, slumber under these circumstances being an impossibility.

3. Invariably to sleep in flannel. The stimulating properties of the air produce feverishness resulting in profuse perspiration during the night; and the dangers of the consequent susceptibility to chill are largely increased by the innumerable draughts that permeate the walls and roofs of all Greek cottages.

4. To change quarters daily if practicable. Where a longer stay is necessary, select a house with as little woodwork about it as possible. But no precautions, short of the employment of mosquito-curtains, can guarantee immunity from insect marauders.

5. Always to have a revolver ready to hand. Of course weapons are useless in an encounter with brigands, who, like Irishmen, never attack except from a position of vantage, and with a numerical superiority over their victims of at least ten to one; but the sight of an English-made pistol will overawe the cupidity of many an amateur robber, and act as a wholesome check upon the natural insolence of the population.

6. In all cases to allow more time than that estimated by the guide for packing up, settling down for the night, making a *détour*, or getting from place to place.

7. Never to bargain personally with the natives; and—

8. Never to believe any of their statements.

THE END.



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